KNYSNA
Municipality Munisipaliteit uMasipala

Medium Term Revenue and Expenditure Framework (MTREF)

Annexure 4

MFMA BUDGET CIRCULARS 82, 85, 86 and NERSA CIRCULARS 2017/2018

Cost Containment Measures (updated November 2016)

Purpose

Section 62(1)(a) of the Municipal Finance Management Act No. 56 of 2003 (MFMA) stipulates that the accounting officer of a municipality is responsible for managing the financial administration of a municipality and must for this purpose take all reasonable steps to ensure that the resources of the municipality are used effectively, efficiently and economically.

In terms of the legal framework, the elected councils and accounting officers are required to institute appropriate measures to ensure that the limited resources and public funds are appropriately utilized to ensure value for money is achieved.

The purpose of this Circular is to guide municipalities and municipal entities on cost containment measures that must be implemented in an effort to address the impact of the country's economic challenges and to promote growth, address unemployment and equality, amongst others.

Background

The national government has been aware of the need to contain costs and Cabinet resolved that all spheres of government, including municipalities and municipal entities must implement measures to contain operational costs and eliminate all non-essential expenditure.

In the 2016 State of the Nation Address, cost containment measures were re-emphasised. It was highlighted that excessive and wasteful expenditure has to be reduced, and that increased action be taken to manage unnecessary expenditure. The following measures were among those announced:

- Curtailment of overseas trips;
- The submission of strong motivation to MM's, Mayors and, where necessary, oversight mechanisms at local, provincial and national spheres of Government by those requesting permission to travel either locally or abroad: i.e. their detailed report including research which argues the necessity of the trip and the benefit the country will achieve in undertaking the journey;
- The institutionalization of further restrictions on conferences, catering, entertainment and social functions.

In reinforcing the above, the Minister of Finance also announced further cost containment measures in his budget speech on 24 February 2016, and urged Mayors of municipalities to exercise and oversee the elimination of wasteful expenditure in

government. SALGA supported the call for cost containment measures to be implemented in municipalities as per the Budget Forum engagements and commitments.

Municipalities must make clear and quantified commitments in this regard when tabling their upcoming budgets, and to reference these commitments when submitting budget documentation to the National and Provincial Treasuries, as required by the MFMA.

Annexure A of this circular presents cost containment measures that accounting officers and chief finance officers must consider in order to contain operational costs and eliminate non-essential expenditure. In addition, municipalities are advised to refer to MFMA Budget Circular No. 70 and other relevant Circulars on the elimination of non-priority spending. (http://mfma.treasury.gov.za/Circulars/Pages/default.aspx).

Enforcement of cost containment measures

SALGA recently expressed concern over the lack of enforcement of such measures and municipal councils are herewith reminded of Section 171(1) of the MFMA whereby the accounting officer of a municipality commits an act of financial misconduct if that accounting officer deliberately or negligently contravenes a provision of the Act, or fails to comply with a duty imposed by the Act on the accounting officer of the municipality.

Failure to fulfill the duty outlined in section 62(1) (a) of the MFMA may result in the accounting officer committing an act of financial misconduct and that disciplinary or criminal proceedings are instituted against any official who has allegedly committed an act of financial misconduct or an offence in terms of chapter 15. The accounting officer also has a duty to ensure that unauthorized, irregular or fruitless and wasteful expenditure and other losses are prevented.

In addition, section 167 of the MFMA provides that a municipality may only remunerate its office bearers within the parameters set out in that section. In particular, sub-section 167(2) provides that any benefit paid that is outside the parameters set out in subsection (1) is irregular expenditure and must be recovered from the political office-bearer concerned.

Details of precisely what a municipality may pay or remunerate its political office bearers are set out in the Notices issued in terms of the Political Office Bearers Act by the Minister of Cooperative Governance and Traditional Affairs.

Municipalities are reminded that the National Treasury will soon be conducting municipal budget benchmark engagements with non-delegated municipalities during which all municipal budgets will be assessed against the cost containment measures outlined in this Circular. Provincial Treasuries will be conducting similar engagements and budget assessments with delegated municipalities.

Consideration has been given to the lack of enforcement measures and therefore it is envisaged that regulations will be issued to align these measures with financial misconduct regulations. Disclosure of cost containment measures applied by the municipality and entity must be included in the Municipal Budget and Annual Report. Measures implemented and regular reports must be submitted to the Municipal Public

Accounts Committee for review and recommendations to Council on additional measures to be taken.

The contents of this Circular has been shared with the office of the Auditor-General for their application, scrutiny and assessment.

Conclusion

It is important that the accounting officer ensures that the content of this Circular is brought to the attention of the Municipal Council and all other relevant officials within municipalities and municipal entities. It is recommended that:

- Municipalities adopt this Circular together with their annual budgets;
- Municipalities are advised to review other finance related policies to ensure consistency with this Circular;
- Municipalities implement the circular by creating the appropriate oversight mechanisms to monitor cost containment measures;
- Implementation of such measures will assist in ensuring that the provisions of sections 62 and 167 of the MFMA are complied with to ensure that reasonable steps are taken for public resources to be used effectively, efficiently, economically and in the best interests of the local community.

Any queries relating to municipalities preparation of municipal budgets in line with the cost containment measures should be directed to the respective National or Provincial Treasury official responsible for monitoring the municipality's budget. The names of these officials can be obtained from MFMA Circular 79 and / or other related MFMA Circulars. This Circular must be tabled before the municipal council for adoption together with the 2016/17 MTREF budget.

Issued on behalf of:

Malijeng Ngqaleni	Kenneth Brown	Jayce Nair
Intergovernmental Relations	Chief Procurement Officer	Acting Accountant-General

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TV PILLAY
CHIEF DIRECTOR: MFMA IMPLEMENTATION
30 MARCH 2016

Annexure A – Cost Containment Measures

Cabinet resolved, on 23 October 2013 that cost containment measures must be implemented to eliminate wasteful expenditure, reprioritize spending and ensure savings on the following focus areas among others; engagement of consultants, travel and subsistence costs, issuing of credit cards, accommodation costs, office furnishing costs, advertising or sponsorship costs, catering and events related costs.

It is prudent that Municipalities consider consultation with its employees and through public participation to obtain input and consideration from affected stakeholders such as communities, ratepayers, businesses, and so on which may prove to be beneficial when facilitating the implementation of cost containment policies and actions.

Municipalities are advised to ensure appropriate monitoring and reporting on such cost saving measures is instituted for ease of reporting to management and council on progress on a regular basis. The internal audit unit of municipalities must be copied with such reports.

1. Engagement of Consultants

- Accounting Officers must only contract with consultants after a gap analysis report has confirmed that the municipality does not have the requisite skills or resources in its permanent employment to perform the services required.
- Evidence of acute planning of the project must be visible to all relevant persons including the administration and political oversight mechanisms in place at the municipality.
- Consultants, including construction and infrastructure related services, must only be remunerated at the rates equal to or below those:
    - determined in the “Guidelines on fees for audits done on behalf of the Auditor-General South Africa”, issued by the South African Institute of Chartered Accountants (SAICA);
    - set out in the “Guide on Hourly Fee Rates for Consultants”, by the Department of Public Service and Administration (DPSA); or
    - Prescribed by the body regulating the profession of the consultant.
- Ensure an exacting “specification” of the work to be accomplished accompanies the tender and is used as a monitoring tool, are appropriately recorded and monitored.
- Ensure that contracts for consultants include retention and penalty clauses for poor performance and in this regard against the above specification, accounting officers must invoke such clauses, where deemed necessary.
- It is mandatory that accounting officers of municipalities and municipal entities conclude on the best “value for money”, i.e. matching fees against quality and against benchmarked practices.
- Accounting officers of municipalities and municipal entities must appoint consultants on a time and cost basis with specific start and end dates.
- Travel and subsistence costs for the appointment of consultants must be in accordance with the travel policy of government and the contract price specifies all travel & subsistence costs.

- If travel and subsistence costs for appointed consultants are exclusive of the contract, the costs must be in accordance with the following provisions:
  a) Hotel accommodation may not exceed the amount mentioned in this Circular;
  b) Only economy class air tickets may be purchased for flights;
  c) Only group B vehicles or lower may be hired for engagements, as mentioned in this Circular;
  d) Kilometres claimed for the use of private vehicles may not exceed the rates approved by the National Department of Transport, as updated from time to time.
- Municipalities are urged to develop consultancy reduction plans.
- Undertake all engagements of consultants in accordance with the SCM Regulations and the municipality's SCM policy.

2. Travel and subsistence

The National Treasury, on behalf of all three spheres of government, has negotiated improved upfront discounts for flights as well as discounted accommodation rates. Therefore municipalities and municipal entities are requested to utilize these agreements to assist in their respective cost containment measures, unless they can negotiate lower air travel rates or utilize other service providers that offer lower rates.

Net and Non-Commissionable Rates
All rates offered to Government as of 1 April 2016 will be net and non-commissionable. This will include the informal accommodation market e.g. Guest Houses and Bed & Breakfast establishments.

Rebates, Overrides, Volume based income
In the spirit of transparency, the OCPO is taking a firm position on rebates, overrides or any volume driven target incentives being paid by suppliers to Travel Management Company (TMC). As of 1 April 2016 these payments and the practice of overrides is to discontinue for Government business.

2.1 National Travel Policy

The National Treasury will issue a National Travel Policy framework during December 2016.

(http://ocpo.treasury.gov.za/Buyers_Area/Legislation/Pages/default.aspx)

2.2 Air Travel

- The National Treasury has negotiated with South African Airways (SAA) and Comair/British Airways (BA) for upfront discounted air fares for government employees travelling domestically for official purpose. These Domestic Air Travel Fares will be regularly reviewed by the National Treasury (These rates are not applicable for International Air Travel).
- For SAA, the discounts range from 5% (L class) up to 30% (Y Class) for Economy Class tickets; and 10% (D Class) up to 26% (C Class) for Business

Class tickets. Please note that business class is not encouraged, however where a single flight exceed 5 hours, consideration may be applied.

- For BA the discounts range from 10% (O, Q class) up to 25% (Y Class) for Economy Class tickets; and 20% (J Class) for Business Class tickets. Please note that business class is not encouraged, however where a single flight exceeds 5 hours, consideration may be applied.
- Treasury entered into a short-term Corporate Agreement from 1 April 2016 to 30 September 2016. This has been extended by a further six months. .
- The premise of "Best Fare on the Day" should be implemented making full use of the negotiated Government Corporate Agreements with SAA and BA Comair. Quotations are to be obtained from at least SAA and BA Comair before issue. Municipalities must also request quotations from other Low Cost Carriers. Please note that all discounted rates are subject to class availability.
- In order to make full use of the corporate discount with SAA and BA, municipalities and municipal entities must instruct their appointed TMCs or persons making their bookings for domestic airline tickets, to book against the relevant deal codes as detailed in Annexure B.
- Corporate agreements with SAA and BA/Comair will be made available to TMCs that are currently contracted to Government. Should the municipal TMC have not been contacted by the full service carrier representative, they are to inform National Treasury with the agents name; physical address, contact name, email address and IATA number. Upon receipt of the information, the representatives of the full service carriers will ensure that the TMC is given access to the deal code. The TMC must have an authenticated IATA number.
- Accounting officers of municipalities and municipal entities are advised to include a clause in their respective documents that travel agencies are only permitted to make booking arrangements on behalf of municipalities and municipal entities in line with this Circular. Current arrangements need to be updated and amended to reflect these changes.
- Disabled persons can be accommodated in economy class, however, in extremely exceptional and rare cases an Accounting Officer may approve, with evidence, other than economy class air travel.

2.3 Domestic Hotel Accommodation

National Treasury has established maximum allowable rates for domestic accommodation. When sourcing accommodation for officials, municipalities should find options that are equal to or lower than the rates in Table 1, depending on the allowable star grading and the band. Competition and cost effectiveness must remain a key principle.

Table 1: Rates set for Domestic Hotel Accommodation

Voucher Includes	BAND 1	BAND 2	BAND 3
	Room Only Tourism Levy VAT	Bed & Breakfast Tourism Levy VAT	Dinner, Bed and Breakfast Tourism Levy VAT 2 x soft Drinks at Dinner
Graded Hotel, Boutique Hotel, Lodge or Resort			
	BAND 1	**BAND 2**	**BAND 3**
1 Star	R 580	R 710	R 855
2 Star	R 900	R 1 030	R 1 230
3 Star	R 1 100	R 1 200	R 1 400
4 Star	R 1 250	R 1 350	R 1 550
5 Star	R 2 100	R 2 200	R 2 500
Bed & Breakfast, Country House or Guest house			
	BAND 1	**BAND 2**	**BAND 3**
1 Star	R 300	R 450	R 630
2 Star	R 500	R 650	R 830
3 Star	R 900	R 1 050	R 1 230
4 Star	R 1 000	R 1 150	R 1 330
5 Star	R 1 200	R 1 350	R 1 530
Self-Catering*			
	BAND 1	**BAND 2**	**BAND 3**
1 Star	R 580		
2 Star	R 900		
3 Star	R 1 100		
4 Star	R 1 250		
5 Star	R 1 450		
Meals**			
	BAND 1	**BAND 2**	**BAND 3**
Breakfast	R 120	R -	R -
Lunch	R 150	R 150	R 150
Dinner	R 150	R 150	R -
Total	**R 420**	**R 300**	**R 150**

Accommodation costs are assumed to be inclusive of Parking and Wi-Fi (if available), and exclusive of Laundry expenses.
**Including Exclusive and Shared Facilities. Exclusive facilities offer travellers a sole occupancy unit consisting of one or more bedrooms and self-contained public areas e.g. kitchen, dining area and lounge.*
Shared Facilities consisting of one or more bedrooms and self-contained shared public areas e.g. kitchen, dining area and lounge.
***Maximum amounts that can be claimed for meals. The claim for the actual amounts must be supported by a receipt.*

- If a negotiated rate for a specific star grading is equivalent to or lower than the rate for the lower star grading, the official may be accommodated in the establishment with the higher star grading. This means that an official may be accommodated at a four star establishment if the rate at the four star establishment is the same as or lower than a three star establishment.

- Where there is an alternative star grading indicated in **Table 1** (i.e. 4/5 or 3/4), the maximum allowable rate of the lower star grading will be the benchmark. The higher star grading can only be booked if:
  a. the higher star graded facility is the only available option due to location and availability; or
  b. the municipality or municipal entity has negotiated lower rates with the higher star graded facility.

- Accounting officers must ensure that overnight accommodation is limited to instances where the distance travelled by road by the employee exceeds 500 kilometres to and from the destination (return journey).

2.4 Vehicle Hire

- Municipalities are encouraged to continue considering their own fleet first, where viable, prior to hiring of vehicles;
- Notwithstanding the provisions above, all employees must make use of shuttle services if the cost of such a service is below the cost of hiring a vehicle.
- Accounting officers must also consider making use of shuttle services if the cost of kilometres claimable by the employee and the cost of parking are higher than the shuttle services.
- Ensure the hiring of vehicles from a category below Group B or an equivalent class. Accounting officers may permit employees to accept up-graded group of hired vehicles if such an up-grade is offered for free or at a lower charge than Group B.
- Vehicle travel claims by employees of municipalities and municipal entities must be restricted to the actual distance travelled in excess of the normal distance from the employee's residence to his or her place of work or as may be negotiated using a motor vehicle allowance scheme.

3 Credit Cards

The use of credit and debit cards was addressed in an earlier MFMA Circular.

A bank, or any other institution, may not issue credit cards or debit cards linked to a bank account of a municipality or a municipal entity to any councillors, entity board members, municipal or entity officials or any other person. The issuing and use of such cards be it for official purposes:

- contravenes section 11 and 85 of the MFMA as there is no way of ensuring that all purchases made on the card are in accordance with the items listed in the sections or as prescribed;
- contravenes section 167 of the MFMA which provides that any bursary, loan, advance or other benefit paid to a municipal councillor otherwise than in accordance with the provisions of the Remuneration of Public Office Bearers Act constitutes irregular expenditure;
- contravening section 15 of the MFMA by incurring expenditure not authorised in an approved budget;
- non-compliance with section 164 of the MFMA which provides that no municipality or municipal entity may make loans to councillors or officials of the municipality, directors or officials of the entity or members of the public;
- non-compliance with the supply chain management regulations; and

- undermines efforts to safeguard municipal funds, combat fraud and corruption, as well as other irregular practices.

While the use of petrol cards or garage cards for municipal vehicles is permitted, it must be utilised in accordance with an appropriate policy and related procedures to avoid misuse thereof. Cost containment measures should be applied in managing and planning trips.

Where officials or councillors incur expenses in relation to official municipal activities, they should use their personal credit cards or cash, and request reimbursement from the municipality in accordance with the relevant municipal policy and processes. Alternatively, the municipality should make arrangements with the service provider that the expenditure be settled directly by the municipality.

4 Catering costs

- Do not incur catering expenses for any meetings where only municipal officials are in attendance. Notwithstanding the above, the accounting officer may incur catering expenses for the following, provided that such lasts for five (5) continuous hours or more:
  a) The hosting of conferences, workshops, courses, forums, recruitment interviews, training courses, hearings;
  b) Meetings related to commissions or committees of inquiry; or
  c) Meetings hosted by municipal councils and the board of directors of municipal entities, including governance committee meetings.
- Ensure that entertainment allowances of qualifying officials do not exceed two thousand rand (R2 000) per person per financial year. The National Treasury may periodically review this amount.
- Do not incur expenses on alcoholic beverages.
- Ensure that team building and social functions, including year-end functions, are not financed from the municipal budgets or by any suppliers or sponsors.
- Notwithstanding the above, accounting officers may incur no more than the petty cash allocation or limitations on expenditure from their respective budgets to host farewell functions to employees who are either:
  (a) proceeding on retirement due to ill health; or
  (b) proceeding on retirement after reaching the qualifying age limit of a minimum of ten (10) or more years working for the public service.
- Accounting officers and accounting authorities may **not** host farewell functions for employees who have:
  (a) been dismissed;
  (b) elected to resign or leave by accepting severance packages; or
  (c) Approached the end of their contractual term.

5 Events, advertising and sponsorships

- Eliminate wasteful expenditure on events, advertising in magazines, television, newspapers etc. where the municipality can use other cost effective means such as websites to market the institution or properly publicise the matters or events under consideration.

- Memorabilia, gifts and other novelties should be of token value only and should only be offered by municipalities and municipal entities in order to acknowledge support or a visit or attendance by a dignitary in connection with a benefit to the local community; to reciprocate the giving of a similar token gift by another organisation; or similar but in all cases there must be an identifiable benefit to the community.
- Limit or stop all unnecessary expenditure on matters such as printing of shirts, hosting of sporting events, festivals and other associated events, cruises, lavish functions, and extraordinary costs associated with visits of dignitaries or induction of new councillors.

6 Conferences, meetings, study tours, etc.

- Employees of municipalities and municipal entities may attend conferences hosted by professional bodies or non-governmental institutions (external conferences) held within the borders of South Africa provided that expenses related to their attendance do not exceed two thousand five hundred rand (R2 500) per person per day. In instances where the cost exceeds this amount, officials must obtain prior approval from the accounting officer. The number of municipal officials attending such conferences and workshops must be limited, see below. The National Treasury may periodically review this amount.
- Employees must make every effort to take advantage of early registration discounts by seeking the required approvals to attend well in advance of the conference as it relates to their area of work. No late registration is acceptable.
- Conferences abroad must be limited to its ultimate minimum or none at all.
- Utilise municipal and/or provincial office facilities for conferences, meetings, strategic planning sessions etc. where an appropriate venue exists within the municipal jurisdiction.
- Limit or stop overseas trips and the delegations going on such trips unless a tangible and clear benefit to the local community and performance of essential service provision can be established beforehand.
- The number of employees travelling to conferences or meetings on official duty for the same matter is limited to three (3) employees, unless otherwise approved in advance by the relevant accounting officer, having due regard to the cost containment measures.
- Similar to the above, the number of employees travelling by air to other centres to attend an official engagement on the same matter is also limited to three (3) employees, unless otherwise approved in advance by the relevant accounting officer, having due regard to the cost containment measures.

7 Office furnishing

- Municipalities should exercise due precaution in refurbishing offices, purchasing equipment, etc. especially when new persons are elected or appointed. Use of existing facilities and equipment is encouraged.
- Office furnishing, when required, should be contained to minimal costs, avoiding elaborate and expensive furniture or equipment.

8 Staff study, perks and suspension costs

- Training attended by employees and councillors of municipalities and municipal entities may only be attended at pre-approved service providers to ensure sufficient quality of training and obtain value for money.
- Expenditure associated with overseas study tours by councillors or officials must be reduced and preferably stopped.
- Encourage staff to take time off to make up for overtime worked.
- Planned overtime must be submitted to management for consideration on a monthly basis.
- Unplanned overtime worked must be motivated and approved by management.
- Costs associated with long-standing staff suspensions and legal costs associated with not following due processes when suspending and dismissing staff must be eliminated.
- Constant management of staff, improvements in productivity levels and feedback must be provided to all staff.

9 Cost containment on other related expenditure items

- Accounting officers of municipalities and municipal entities are advised to ensure that all commodities and products that the National Treasury designated as transversal contracts are utilised to benefit from savings where lower prices or rates have been negotiated.
- Periodic or quarterly threat assessments against councillors and key officials should be undertaken by the appropriate authority (SAPS) and reported to the Speakers Office. Approval for security measures must be informed by such reports, if paid for from municipal funds. The use of metropolitan traffic officers for such purposes should be avoided.
- Municipal funds may not be used to fund election campaign activities, including the provision of supporting material, clothing, food, inducements to vote either as part of, or during election rallies.
- Printing of documents should carefully considered be back-to-back and use of colour printing for graphs only, while use of electronic means should be preferred.
- Review and introduce limits on municipal staff telephones and limiting private call to a reasonable amount.
- Every effort must be made to recover debt from consumers before write-off. Municipalities to avoid the excessive usage of debt collectors and improve its internal capacity for debt collection.
- Ensure synergy between municipal divisions or departments to avoid duplication of processes and efforts.
- Where possible the warranties on vehicle and computer equipment should be extended instead of procuring new ones.
- Labour saving devices should be shared to optimize the capacity utilization of each device.
- Purchasing of newspapers and other publications for municipal employees to limited and stopped.
- Municipalities should ensure that awareness is raised with municipal staff so that a high degree of energy saving measures can be introduced, e.g. air-conditioning and lights in buildings are switched off at night and when offices are not in use.

- All other cost containment measures introduced by council are also encouraged and supported.

Annexure B: BA/COMAIR and SAA Deal Codes per Municipality

Municipalities and municipal entities should use the following codes when requesting quotes from BA/COMAIR.

MUNICIPALITIES	
NAME	**DEAL CODE**
EASTERN CAPE	
Alfred Nzo District Municipality Matatiele, Mbizana, Ntabankulu and uMzimvubu	1020907
Amathole District Municipality Amahlathi, Mnquma, Ngqushwa, Raymond Mhlaba, Mbashe and Great Kei,	1020906
Buffalo City Metropolitan Municipality	1020901
Chris Hani District Municipality Emalahleni, Engcobo, Intsika, Inxuba, Sakhisizwe and Enoch Mgijima	1020908
Joe Gqabi District Municipality Elundini, Walter Sisulu and Senqu	1020909
Nelson Mandela Bay Metropolitan Municipality	1020899
OR Tambo District Municipality Ingquza Hill, King Sabata Dalindyebo, Mhlontlo, Nyandeni and Port St Johns	1020903
Sarah Baartman District Municipality Dr Beyers Naudé, Blue Crane Route, Makana, Ndlambe, Sundays River Valley, Kouga and Kou-kamma	1020921
FREE STATE	
Fezile Dabi District Municipality Mafube, Moqhaka, Metsimaholo and Ngwathe	1020922
Lejweleputswa Distric Municipality Masilonyana, Matjhabeng, Nala, Tokologo and Tswelopele	1020923
Mangaung Metropolitan	1020923
Thabo Mafutsanyana District Dihlabeng, Maluti - a- Phofung, Mantsopa, Nketoana, Phumelela and Setsoto	1020924
Xhariep District Kopanong, Letsemeng and Mohokare	1020925
GAUTENG	
City of Johannesburg Metropolitan	1020900
City of Tshwane Metropolitan	1020898
Ekurhuleni Metropolitan	1020904
Sedibeng District Emfuleni, Lesedi and Midvaal	1020926
West Rand District Merafong, Mogale City, Rand West	1020927
KWAZULU-NATAL	
eThekwini Metropolitan	1008810
iLembe District Municipality KwaDukuza, Mandeni, Maphumulo and Ndwedwe	1020929
Harry Gwala District Municipality Greater Kokstad, Uhlebezwe, Umzimkhulu and Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma	1020835

MUNICIPALITIES	
NAME	**DEAL CODE**
Ugu District Municipality uMdoni, Umzumbe, uMuziwabantu and Ray Nkonyeni	1020836
uMgungundlovu District Municipality KZN uMshwathi, uMngeni, Mpofana, Impendle, Msunduzi, Mkhambathini and Richmond	1020837
uMkhanyakude District Municipality KZN Umhlabuyalingana, Jozini, Mtubatuba and Big Five Hlabisa	1020838
uMzinyathi District Municipality KZN Endumeni, Nquthu, Msinga, Umvoti	1020839
uThukela District Municipality Okhahlamba, iNkosi Langalibalele and Alfred Duma	1020840
King Cetshwayo district Municipality uMfolozi, uMhlathuze, uMlalazi, Mthonjaneni and Nkandla	1020841
Zululand District Municipality KZN eDumbe, uPhongolo, Abaqulusi, Nongoma and Ulundi	1020842
LIMPOPO	
Capricon District Municipality Blouberg, Lepelle-Nkumpi, Molemole and Polokwane	1020843
Mopani District Municipality Ba-Phalaborwa, Greater Giyani, Greater Letaba, Greater Tzaneen and Maruleng	1020844
Sekhukhune District Municipality LM Ephraim Mogale, Elias Motsoaledi, Makhuduthamaga and LIM476	1020845
Vhembe District Municipality LM Musina, Thulamela, Makhado and LIM345	1020846
Waterberg Disrict Municipality Thabazimbi, Lephalale, Bela Bela, Mogalakwena and LIM 368	1020847
MPUMALANGA	
Ehlanzeni District Municipality Thaba Chweu, Nkomazi, Bushbuckridge and City of Mbombela	1020902
Gert Sibande District Albert Luthuli, Dipaleseng, Govan Mbeki, Lekwa, Mkhondo, Msukaligwa and Pixley Ka Isaka Seme	1020848
Nkangala District Dr JS Moroka, Emakhazeni, Emalahleni, Steve Tshwete, Thembisile Hani and Victor Khanye	1020849
NORTH WEST	
Bojanala Platinum District Kgetlengriver, Madibeng, Moretele, Moses Kotane and Rusternburg	1020850
Dr Kenneth Kaunda District Municipality City of Matlosana, Maquassi and NW405	1020851
Dr Ruth Segomotsi Mompati District Municipality Greater Taung, Kagisano-Molopo, Lekwa-Teemane, Mamusa and Naledi	1020852
Ngaka Modiri Molema District Municipality Ditsobotla, Mahikeng, Ramotshere, Ratlou and Tswaing	1020853
NORTHERN CAPE	
John Taolo Gaetsewe Ga-Segonyana, Joe Morolong and Gamagara	1020909
Namakwa	1020856

MUNICIPALITIES	
NAME	**DEAL CODE**
Hantam, Kamiesberg, Karoo Hoogland, Khai-Ma, Nama Khoi and Richtersveld	
Pixley Ka Seme Emthanjeni, Kareeberg, Renosterberg, Siyancuma, Siyathemba, Thembelihle, Ubuntu and Umsobomvu	1020857
ZF Mgcawu !Kai! Garib, !Kheis, Tsantsabane, Kgatelopele and Dawid Kruiper	1020858
WESTERN CAPE	
Cape Winelands District Municipality Witzenberg, Drakenstein, Stellenbosch, Breede Valley and Langeberg	1020859
Central Karoo District Municipality Beaufort West, Laingsburg and Prince Albert	1020859
City of Cape Town Metro	1008771
Eden District Municipality Bitou, George, Hessequa, Kannaland, Kynsna, Mossel Bay and Oudtshoorn	1020861
Overberg District Municipality Cape Agulhas, Overstrand, Swellendam and Theewaterskloof	1020862
West Coast District Municipality Bergrivier, Cederberg, Matzikama, Swartland and Saldanha Bay	1020863

Municipalities and municipal entities not listed above should use the following details to contact BA/Comair to obtain a deal code:

Contact Details
Nangamso Letlape: National Account Manager: Government
Nan.letlape@comair.co.za

Municipalities and municipal entities should use the following deal code when requesting quotations from SAA: CK3828. In order to arrange access to the deal codes, travel management companies servicing municipalities and municipal entities should contact the following SAA representatives:

Contact Details
Eastern Cape: Tracy Mentzel (tracymentzel@flysaa.com)
Western Cape: Enid Sinequan (enidsinequan@flysaa.com)
KwaZulu-Natal: Kriba Govender (kribagovender@flysaa.com)
All other provinces: Mark Steele (marksteele@flysaa.com)

NATIONAL TREASURY

MFMA Circular No. 85

Municipal Finance Management Act No. 56 of 2003

Municipal Budget Circular for the 2017/18 MTREF

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Introduction

This budget circular guides municipalities on the preparation of the 2017/18 Medium Term Revenue and Expenditure Framework (MTREF) and should be referenced to previous annual budget circulars. Among the objectives of this circular is to support municipalities with giving effect to National Treasury's Municipal Budget and Reporting Regulations (MBRR) within the current economic climate. The key focus of this circular is the implementation of municipal Standard Chart of Accounts (*m*SCOA) and addressing municipal revenue generation challenges.

1. The South African economy and inflation targets

The 2016 Medium Term Budget Policy Statement emphasised that the global recovery from the 2008 financial crisis remains precarious, with growth forecast at 3.1 per cent in 2016 and 3.4 per cent in 2017. In developed economies, the combination of weak economic growth, low or negative interest rates, and elevated asset prices has increased the likelihood of renewed financial volatility. Countries that are highly reliant on foreign savings, such as South Africa, will remain vulnerable to global financial volatility and rapid capital outflows. While global economic weakness plays a large role in South Africa's economic growth performance, domestic constraints stand in the way of investment, output and trade.

Domestic GDP growth for 2016 was forecasted at 0.9 per cent at the time of the 2016 Budget and it has since been revised to 0.5 per cent. It is anticipated that factors such as a more reliable electricity supply, improved labour relations, low inflation, a recovery in business and consumer confidence, stabilising commodity prices and stronger global growth will increase growth to 2.2 per cent by 2019. Furthermore, the country has experienced a decline in mining growth and weakened agricultural outputs as a result of the drought while growth in transport and telecommunications, electricity, gas and water have declined because of weakened demand.

In the 12 months to June 2016, employment fell by 112 000 jobs although employment growth was achieved in most larger urban municipalities. In the context of an unfavourable economic and investment climate, the unemployment rate increased from 25 per cent to 26.6 per cent. According to the June 2016 Quarterly Employment Statistics, all sectors, with the exception of construction, shed jobs in the second quarter of 2016. A turnaround of these bleak unemployment statistics will require higher economic growth and renewed private-sector investment.

These economic challenges will continue to pressurise municipal revenue generation and collection hence a conservative approach is advised for projecting revenue. Municipalities will have to improve their efforts to limit non-priority spending and to implement stringent cost-containment measures.

The following macro-economic forecasts must be considered when preparing the 2017/18 MTREF municipal budgets.

Table 1: Macroeconomic performance and projections, 2015 - 2019

Fiscal year	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
	Actual	Estimate	Forecast		
CPI Inflation	4.6%	6.4%	6.1%	5.9%	5.8%

Source: Medium Term Budget Policy Statement 2016.

Note: the fiscal year referred to is the national fiscal year (April to March) which is more closely aligned to the municipal fiscal year (July to June) than the calendar year inflation.

2. Key focus areas for the 2017/18 budget process

2.1 Local government conditional grants and additional allocations

The *2016 Medium Term Budget Policy Statement* indicates that for the 2017 MTEF period, transfers to local government total R366.3 billion, of which 61.8 per cent is transferred as unconditional allocations while the remainder is conditional grants. National funding to local government has increased to R112.5 billion or 9.1 per cent of the national revenue for 2017/18 and is expected to increase to R132.3 billion by 2019/20.

The purpose of conditional grants is to deliver on national government service delivery priorities. It is imperative that municipalities understand and comply with the conditions stipulated in the Division of Revenue Act (DoRA) in order to access this funding. The equitable share and the sharing of the general fuel levy constitute additional unconditional funding, of which the equitable share is designed to fund the provision of free basic services to disadvantaged communities.

Municipalities are advised to use the indicative numbers presented in the 2016 Division of Revenue Act to compile their 2017/18 MTREF. In terms of the outer year allocations (2019/20 financial year), it is proposed that municipalities conservatively limit funding allocations to the indicative numbers as proposed in the 2016 Division of Revenue Act for 2017/18. The DoRA is available at http://ntintranet/legislation/acts/2016/Default.aspx

It is imperative that municipalities reflect all their grant allocations in accordance with the Division of Revenue Bill to be published in February 2017 after the budget speech by the Minister of Finance, and plan effectively to utilise these allocations appropriately so that requests for roll-overs of conditional grants are avoided.

Changes to local government allocations

- The *local government equitable share* will grow at an average annual rate of above 9 per cent over the MTEF, this is as a result of funds that will be added in 2018/19 and 2019/20 to offset the cost pressures of water and electricity purchases which continue to grow faster than inflation. The local government equitable share formula will also be updated with the 2016 Community Survey data.

- Four local government conditional grants, namely, the *public transport network grant*, the *water services infrastructure grant*, the *municipal infrastructure grant* and the *urban settlements development grant* will be reduced to avail resources for fiscal consolidation and the funding of urgent priorities. In spite of the decreased allocations each of these grants will grow by at least 5 per cent annually over the 2017 MTEF period.

- Funds reprioritised out of:
  - the *expanded public works programme integrated grant* to municipalities to fund the expanded mandate of the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (as the commission will be providing its services to additional sectors);
  - the indirect *integrated national electrification programme (Eskom) grant*, mainly to fund the management of nuclear waste; and
  - the indirect *regional bulk infrastructure grant* of which small amounts will be utilised to augment funding for water catchment management agencies in the two outer years of the MTEF.

- An additional R50.6 million will be added to the indirect *water services infrastructure grant* to fund the provision of emergency water supplies to drought-affected communities.

Reforms to local government fiscal framework

The National Treasury continues to lead a review of the local government infrastructure conditional grants. The merger of several conditional grants and the trend towards greater grant consolidation over the MTEF are among the outcomes of this review process.

Proposed reforms commencing from 2017 include:

- The introduction of performance incentives for urban infrastructure grants, as well as a new dispensation for large cities other than the metros, that better respond to built-environment challenges and growth opportunities;

- The refinement of grant allocation rules to encourage budgeting for routine maintenance. This will complement changes that are already in place to permit grants to fund the refurbishment of infrastructure; and

- Introducing greater differentiation between urban and rural areas. Secondary cities in particular will see changes to their planning requirements.

A shift of funds from the *integrated national electrification programme (municipal) grant* for projects in metropolitan municipalities to the *urban settlements development grant* in 2017/18 is still being discussed with the relevant departments. This shift is likely to improve the coordination of the delivery of electrical infrastructure with other basic services and make the co-funding of projects easier.

2.2 Municipal Standard Chart of Accounts (*m*SCOA)[1]

The *m*SCOA Regulations apply to all municipalities and municipal entities with effect from 1 July 2017. This means that the compilation of the 2017/18 Medium-Term Budget and Expenditure Framework (MTREF) must be compliant with the *m*SCOA classification framework.

It is imperative that municipalities are familiar with the addendum to MFMA Circular No. 80 which describes what constitutes *m*SCOA compliance by 1 July 2017.

In summary, compliance to *m*SCOA by 1 July 2017 requires that municipalities have the following in place:

- Systems-Integrated Integrated Development Plan (IDP);
- Systems-Integrated budget module; and
- Systems that enable transacting across the seven segments of *m*SCOA with subsystems seamlessly integrating to the core system.

All the tabled 2017/18 MTREF budgets and the IDP submissions will be assessed in March 2017 for *m*SCOA compliance. National Treasury has a dedicated website to support municipalities with their *m*SCOA readiness efforts.

For more information on *m*SCOA and other benefits of the reform, visit: http://mfma.treasury.gov.za/RegulationsandGazettes/MunicipalRegulationsOnAStandardChartOfAccountsFinal/Pages/default.aspx

[1] The Minister of Finance promulgated the Municipal Regulations on a Standard Chart of Accounts in government gazette Notice No. 37577 on 22 April 2014.

2.3 Reporting indicators

The National Treasury is finalising the process of rationalising the built environment reporting regime for the eight metropolitan municipalities with an aim to reduce the reporting burden, whilst also creating a set of indicators that will enable government to monitor progress on the integrated and functional outcomes. Significant progress has been made with the introduction of integrated outcomes indicators, whilst rigorous consultation is underway to rationalise the inputs, activities and output indicators.

The metropolitan integrated outcome indicators are linked to the Built Environment Performance Plans (BEPPs) and therefore the Integrated City Development Grant (ICDG); whereas the inputs, activities and process indicators are linked directly to *m*SCOA. Outputs indicators are linked directly to the Service Delivery Budget Implementation Plan (SDBIP). When finalised, these indicators will assist the process of standardising the SDBIP, a significant streamlining of reporting requirements to national government.

For metropolitan municipalities, the Urban Settlement Development Grant (USDG) performance matrix remains a framework of presenting the targets and baselines for the built environment as currently adopted budget in the 2015/16 financial year. However, the finalisation of the rationalisation process will replace the performance matrix. The indicators agreed upon through the rationalisation process to achieve functional outcomes and key outputs will be incorporated into the new standardised SDBIP template process. The integrated outcomes indicators were finalised as part of the BEPPs annual process whilst the work on the functional outcomes and functional output indicators is being finalised for the next budget cycle. These reforms will progressively be extended to non-metropolitan municipalities over the medium term.

3. Development of Integrated Development Plan (IDP)

Municipalities are in the process of developing their next 5 year IDPs which is an opportunity to re-assess the long term development vision in the context of key global and national policies and priorities including the Sustainable Development Goals, the National Development Plan, Integrated Urban Development Framework and the Back-to-Basics Programme. IDPs should reflect catalytic programmes and projects to be implemented by national and provincial government as well as State Owned Entities within their municipal boundaries and illustrate how these are aligned to the municipal development agenda. These include but are not limited to:

- Strategic Infrastructure Projects (SIPs);
- Special Economic Zones (SEZs);
- Agri-parks; and
- Catalytic housing projects.

The Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act No. 32 of 2000) provides that municipalities should undertake an integrated development planning process that integrates all sectors' strategies, programmes and projects to promote integrated development in communities. Municipal planning must be more strategic and cross-sectoral (integrated), and the IDP as the key planning tool, must be used to deliver this strategic and cross-sectoral planning vision at a local level.

It is however, acknowledged that some municipalities have already developed their sector plans. In order to ensure that integrated development is realised, municipalities are advised to, as part of the IDP development process, review these plans to ensure that they are in line with key national and provincial government policies and programmes.

Municipalities must also ensure that there is closer alignment of the planning instruments and budgets as well as mechanisms for monitoring progress and performance. Both the *m*SCOA and reporting reforms provide essential tools to strengthen coordination and oversight in this respect.

Metropolitan municipalities have already made progress in aligning their planning instruments with the budget through the BEPPs. The guidelines on the preparation of the BEPPs clearly articulate the relationship between the Municipal Spatial Development Framework (MSDF) and the IDP.

All municipalities are encouraged to refer to the 2017/18 BEPPs guidelines available on National Treasury's website at: http://mfma.treasury.gov.za/Documents/Forms/AllItems.aspx?RootFolder=%2fDocuments%2f02%2e%20Built%20Environment%20Performance%20Plans%2f2017-18%2f1%2e%20BEPP%20Guidelines%202017_18&FolderCTID=&View=%7b84CA1A01-

4. The revenue budget

National Treasury encourages municipalities to maintain tariff increases at levels that reflect an appropriate balance between the affordability to poorer households and other customers while ensuring the financial sustainability of the municipality. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation has however breached the upper limit of the 3 to 6 per cent target band; therefore municipalities are now required to ***justify all increases in excess of the 6.1 per cent*** projected inflation target in their budget narratives, and pay careful attention to the differential incidence of tariff increases across all consumer groups.

4.1 Maximising the revenue generation of the municipal revenue base

Municipalities must make a greater effort to integrate the work of their Town Planning and Valuations functions. This will ensure that every new property development, improvements to existing properties and changes to property usage and other such influences are correctly processed and filtered to the billing system. This will enable timeous and accurate updating of municipal accounts. The completeness, correctness and validity of the General Valuation Roll and supplementary valuations as well as resolving any objections to property values within the prescriptions of the Municipal Property Rates Act, 2004 (Act No.6 of 2004), are fundamental to protecting and growing the municipal revenue base.

In addition, the necessary reconciliations must be in place to ensure that the correct tariffs are applied for property rates and all trading services, that the correct accountholders are billed and that the municipal accounts are reaching the customers who are responsible for payment. These are among the minimum requirements of creating a *"positive and reciprocal relationship between persons liable for making payment to the municipality and the municipality or service provider"* as per section 95 of the Municipal Systems Act, 2000 (Act No. 32 of 2000).

When municipalities fail to achieve these minimum legally prescribed requirements there is a greater risk of burdening customers with higher tariff increases to compensate for operational inefficiencies.

It is therefore necessary for municipalities to ensure that their tariffs are adequate to, at the minimum, cover the costs of bulk services and also to ensure that all properties are correctly billed for property rates and all services rendered.

4.2 Eskom bulk tariff increases

In terms of the Multi-Year Price Determination (MYPD) for Eskom's tariffs approved by the National Energy Regulator of South Africa (NERSA), a tariff increase of 8 per cent has been approved for the 2017/18 financial year.

Municipalities are urged to examine the cost structure of providing electricity services and to apply to NERSA for electricity tariff increases that reflect the total cost of providing the service so that they work towards achieving fully cost-reflective tariffs that will help them achieve financial sustainability. Municipalities in arrears with Eskom should ensure that their payment arrangements are effected in their 2017/18 MTREF budget.

4.3 Water and sanitation tariff increases

The 2015 Municipal Services Strategic Assessment report (MuSSA) issued by the Department of Water and Sanitation shows that the majority of municipal Water Service Authorities (WSAs) are operating their water services at a loss. This performance is as a result of, amongst others, implementation of tariffs that are not cost-reflective and unsubstantiated institutional arrangements between districts (WSAs) and local municipalities. It is problematic that there are no clear responsibilities with respect to bulk purchases, billings and collections, the allocation of revenue collected and maintenance of water infrastructure between the districts and their local municipalities.

Municipalities must improve revenue generation from this service through better financial management, demand management, maintenance and meter reading as it will enable payment of creditors such as water boards. This baseline information is critical to tariff setting and budget compilation. Municipalities in arrears with water boards should ensure that their payment arrangements are effected in their 2017/18 MTREF budget.

The previous MFMA budget Circular No. 78 advised municipalities that had historically set tariffs too low to facilitate cost recovery, to develop a pricing strategy to phase-in the necessary tariff increases in a manner that distributes the impact on consumers over a period of time. The introduction of *m*SCOA provides for a costing segment which, when correctly utilised, will assist municipalities to determine the full cost of rendering trading services such as water and electricity.

In light of the current drought experienced across large parts of the country, water is now a scarce resource that must be conserved. Municipalities must put in place appropriate strategies to curb water losses as a result of leakages. The ageing infrastructure is a contributing factor as many municipalities have historically inadequately provided for repairs and maintenance and renewal of water infrastructure. There is now a national initiative underway to encourage consumers to conserve water; and there are several municipalities that have imposed water restrictions. These municipalities have introduced penalty tariffs for non-compliant consumers and they rely on consumer reports and/or complaints to address any non-compliance. Monitoring water consumption is critical and this means reliance on meter reading information to assess consumption patterns or trends and inspections. Municipalities must ensure that any drought penalty tariffs are provided for in their tariff policy to be tabled in March 2017; another option is to incorporate the penalty tariffs in the Inclining Block Tariff (IBT) structure.

5. Funding choices and management issues

The Circular clearly outlines that, as a result of the economic landscape and weak tariff setting, municipalities are under pressure to generate revenue. The ability of customers to pay for services is declining and this means that less revenue will be collected. Therefore municipalities must consider the following when compiling their 2017/18 MTREF budgets:

- improving the effectiveness of revenue management processes and procedures;
- paying special attention to cost containment measures by, amongst other things, controlling unnecessary spending on nice-to-have items and non-essential activities;
- the affordability of providing free basic services to all households; and
- curbing consumption of water and electricity by the indigents to ensure that they do not exceed their allocation.

5.1 Employee related costs

The South African Local Government Bargaining Council entered into a three-year *Salary and Wage Collective Agreement* for the period 01 July 2015 to 30 June 2018. The preparation of the 2017/18 MTREF constitutes implementation of the last year of the agreement which municipalities must implement as follows:

- *2017/18 Financial Year – average CPI (Feb 2016 – Jan 2017) + 1 per cent*

The previous years were:

- *2015/16 Financial Year – 7 per cent*
- *2016/17 Financial Year – average CPI (Feb 2015 – Jan 2016) + 1 per cent*

5.2 Remuneration of councilors

Municipalities are advised to budget for the actual costs approved in accordance with the Government Gazette on the Remuneration of Public Office Bearers Act: Determination of Upper Limits of Salaries, Allowances and Benefits of different members of municipal councils published annually between December and January by the Department of Cooperative Governance.

6. Conditional Grant Transfers to Municipalities

6.1 Pledging of conditional grants

In terms of the MFMA Circular No.79 and the pledging process outlined in MFMA Circular No. 51, municipalities are required to send the National Treasury a comprehensive pledge request for the implementation of projects to be accelerated. Upon approval of the pledge request a progress report must be submitted to National Treasury and when concluded, a close out report indicating the actual expenditure of the amount received from associated borrowings and the difference between what was planned and what was implemented.

Furthermore, the municipality must submit to National Treasury, a signed council resolution approving the pledge application together with a letter from the relevant national department supporting such application. National Treasury will NOT grant any extensions of the pledge period as this defeats the purpose of accelerating projects that are ready for implementation.

7. The Municipal Budget and Reporting Regulations

National Treasury has released Version 6.1 of Schedule A1 (the Excel Formats) which is aligned to version 6.1 of the *m*SCOA classification framework which must be used when compiling the 2017/18 MTREF budget. This version incorporates major changes (see Annexure A). Therefore **ALL** municipalities **MUST** use this version for the preparation of their 2017/18 MTREF budget.

Download Version 6.1 of Schedule A1 by clicking HERE

The Municipal Budget and Reporting Regulations, formats and associated guides are available on National Treasury's website at:
http://mfma.treasury.gov.za/RegulationsandGazettes/Pages/default.aspx

If municipalities require advice with the compilation of their respective budgets, specifically the budget documents or Schedule A1, they should direct their enquiries to their respective provincial treasuries or to the following National Treasury official:

	Responsible NT officials	Tel. No.	Email
Eastern Cape	Templeton Phogole Matjatji Mashoeshoe	012-315 5044 012-315 6567	Templeton.Phogole@treasury.gov.za Matjatji.Mashoeshoe@treasury.gov.za
Free State	Vincent Malepa Cethekile Moshane Katlego Mabiletsa	012-315 5539 012-315 5079 012-395 6742	Vincent.Malepa@treasury.gov.za Cethekile.moshane@treasury.gov.za Katlego.Mabiletsa@treasury.gov.za
Gauteng	Kgomotso Baloyi Nomxolisi Mawulana	012-315 5866 012-315 5460	Kgomotso.Baloyi@treasury.gov.za Nomxolisi.Mawulana@treasury.gov.za
KwaZulu-Natal	Bernard Mokgabodi Johan Botha	012-315 5936 012-315 5171	Bernard.Mokgabodi@treasury.gov.za Johan.Botha@treasury.gov.za
Limpopo	Una Rautenbach Sifiso Mabaso	012-315 5700 012-315 5952	Una.Rautenbach@treasury.gov.za Sifiso.Mabaso@treasury.gov.za
Mpumalanga	Jordan Maja Anthony Moseki	012-315 5663 012-315 5174	Jordan.Maja@treasury.gov.za Anthony.Moseki@treasury.gov.za
Northern Cape	Willem Voigt Mandla Gilimani	012-315 5830 012-315 5807	Willem.Voigt@treasury.gov.za Mandla.Gilimani@treasury.gov.za
North West	Sadesh Ramjathan Makgabo Mabotja	012-315 5101 012-315 5156	Sadesh.Ramjathan@treasury.gov.za Makgabo.Mabotja@treasury.gov.za
Western Cape	Templeton Phogole Kevin Bell	012-315 5044 012-315 5725	Templeton.Phogole@treasury.gov.za Kevin.Bell@treasury.gov.za
Technical issues with Excel formats	Elsabe Rossouw	012-315 5534	lgdataqueries@treasury.gov.za

National Treasury, together with the provincial treasuries, will undertake a compliance check and, where municipalities have not provided complete budget information, the municipal budgets will be returned to the mayors and municipal managers of the affected municipalities for the necessary corrections. Municipal managers are reminded that the annual budget must be accompanied by a quality certificate and council resolution in accordance with the format specified in item 31 of Schedule A of the Municipal Budget and Reporting Regulations.

The National Treasury would like to emphasise that where municipalities have not adhered to the Municipal Budget and Reporting Regulations, ***they will be required to go back to the municipal council and table a complete budget document aligned to the requirement of the Municipal Budget and Reporting Regulations. In addition, where municipalities have adopted an unfunded budget, they will be required to correct the budget to ensure it adopt and implement a funded budget***.

Municipalities with municipal entities are once again reminded to prepare consolidated budgets and in-year monitoring reports for both the parent municipality and its entity or entities. The following must be compiled:

- An annual budget, adjustments budget and monthly financial reports for the parent municipality in the relevant formats;

- An annual budget, adjustments budget and monthly financial reports for the entity in the relevant formats; and
- A consolidated annual budget, adjustments budget and monthly financial reports for the parent municipality and all its municipal entities in the relevant formats.

The A Schedule that the municipality submits to National Treasury must be a consolidated budget for the municipality (plus entities) and the budget of the parent municipality. D schedules must be submitted for each entity.

8. Budget process and submissions for the 2016/17 MTREF

8.1 Budgeting for the cost of Free Basic Services

The basic services component of the equitable share includes funding for the provision of free basic water (six kilolitres per poor household per month), energy (50 kilowatt-hours per month), sanitation and refuse (based on service levels defined by national policy). Municipalities must ensure that the cost of providing free basic services to indigents is captured on table SA9. This will result in the cost being deducted from revenue on table SA1.

Municipalities must further ensure that any subsidies in excess of the limits as provided in the equitable share allocation are not included on table SA9 as cost of providing of free basic services, however should be deducted as revenue foregone on table SA1. The cost of free basic services funded from the equitable share is disclosed on table SA1 while the revenue cost of subsidised services is on table A10. This will allow for comparison of the cost incurred by municipalities in providing free basic services to poor households and the amount received from the national government for this purpose.

The change in the treatment of cost of free basic services indicates that municipalities must not disclose the support to indigents on table SA21 “Transfers and grants”. This change will also improve the quality of information on table A10.

8.2 Submitting budget documentation and schedules for 2017/18 MTREF

To facilitate oversight of compliance with the Municipal Budget and Reporting Regulations, accounting officers are reminded that:

- Section 22(b)(i) of the MFMA requires that, ***immediately*** after an annual budget is tabled in a municipal council, it must be submitted to the National Treasury and the relevant provincial treasury in both printed and electronic formats. If the annual budget is tabled to council on 31 March 2017, the final date of submission of the electronic budget documents and corresponding electronic returns is **Monday, 03 April 2017**. The deadline for submission of hard copies including council resolution is **Friday, 7 April 2017**.
- Section 24(3) of the MFMA, read together with regulation 20(1), requires that the approved annual budget must be submitted to both National Treasury and the relevant provincial treasury ***within ten working days*** after the council has approved the annual budget. If the council only approves the annual budget on 30 June 2017, the final date for such a submission is **Friday, 14 July 2017**, otherwise an earlier date applies.

The municipal manager must submit:

- the budget documentation as set out in Schedule A (version 6.1) of the Municipal Budget and Reporting Regulations, including the main Tables (A1 - A10) and ALL the supporting tables (SA1 – SA38) in both printed and electronic formats;

- the draft service delivery and budget implementation plan in both printed and electronic format;
- the draft integrated development plan;
- the council resolution;
- signed Quality Certificate as prescribed in the Municipal Budget and Reporting Regulations; and
- schedules D, E and F specific for the entities.

Municipalities are required to send electronic versions of documents and the A1 schedule to lgdocuments@treasury.gov.za.

If the budget documents are too large to be sent via email (exceeds 4MB) please submit to lgbigfiles@gmail.com. Any problems experienced in this regard can be addressed with Elsabe Rossouw at Elsabe.Rossouw@treasury.gov.za.

Municipalities are required to send printed submissions of their budget documents and council resolution to:

For couriered documents	***For posted documents***
Ms Linda Kruger	Ms Linda Kruger
National Treasury	National Treasury
40 Church Square	Private Bag X115
Pretoria, 0002	Pretoria, 0001

In addition to the above mentioned budget documentation, metropolitan municipalities must submit the Built Environment Performance Plan (BEPP) tabled in council on 30 May 2017 to Yasmin.coovadia@treasury.gov.za. If the BEPP documents are too large to be sent via email (exceeds 4MB) please submit to yasmin.coovadia@gmail.com or send to Yasmin Coovadia via Dropbox; any problems experienced in this regard can be addressed with Yasmin.Coovadia@treasury.gov.za. Hard copies of the BEPP may be sent to Yasmin Coovadia, National Treasury, 3rd floor 40 Church Square, Pretoria, 0002 or Private Bag X115, Pretoria, 0001.

8.3 Budget reform returns to the Local Government Database for publication

Municipalities are required to continue to use the Budget Reform Returns to upload budget and monthly expenditure to the National Treasury Local Government Database for publication purposes. All returns are to be sent to lgdatabase@treasury.gov.za. Municipalities must submit returns for both the draft budget and the final adopted budget as this will assist the National and provincial treasuries with the annual benchmark process.

In addition, municipalities must submit the *m*SCOA compliant data strings to the LG Upload Portal. National Treasury will continue with parallel reporting from municipalities until it is satisfied that all municipalities are *m*SCOA compliant and reporting adequately to support all publications.

The current electronic returns may be downloaded from National Treasury's website at the following link: http://mfma.treasury.gov.za/Return_Forms/Pages/default.aspx.

8.4 Publication of budgets on municipal websites

In terms of section 75 of the MFMA, all municipalities are required to publish their tabled budgets, adopted budgets, annual reports (containing audited annual financial statements) and other relevant information on the municipality's website. This will aid in promoting public accountability and good governance.

All relevant documents mentioned in this circular are available on the National Treasury website, http://mfma.treasury.gov.za/Pages/Default.aspx. Municipalities are encouraged to visit it regularly as documents are regularly added / updated on the website.

8.5 Municipal Money and the National Treasury data portal

All municipalities are also reminded that information submitted to the National Treasury, including budget information, is made available to the public via www.municipalmoney.gov.za and an underlying data portal. This initiative was announced by the Minister of Finance in October 2016, and enables direct citizen engagement with the finances of their municipalities on a comparative basis. The information is currently being used regularly and municipalities are reminded that any inaccuracies in their submissions will also be transferred to this website. Municipalities are encouraged to widely advertise this service for citizens in municipal facilities and make available your municipal profiles, when requested by citizens at these facilities.

Contact

national treasury
Department:
National Treasury
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Post	Private Bag X115, Pretoria 0001
Phone	012 315 5009
Fax	012 395 6553
Website	http://www.treasury.gov.za/default.aspx

JH Hattingh
Chief Director: Local Government Budget Analysis
09 December 2016

Annexure A – Changes to Schedule A1 – the 'Excel formats'

As noted above, National Treasury has released Version 6.1 of Schedule A1 (the Excel Formats). It incorporates the following changes:

No.	Sheet	Amendment	Reason
1	A2 and A2A	Changed reference to "Standard Classification" to functional classification and included detailed functional classification.	Align to version 6.1 of *m*SCOA classification framework
2	A4, SA2 and SA25	Deleted "Property rates – penalties and collection charges". Changed description for fines to "Fines, penalties and forfeits".	Align to version 6.1 of *m*SCOA classification framework
4	A5	Changed reference to "Standard Classification" to functional classification	Align to version 6.1 of *m*SCOA classification framework
5	A7 and SA30	Changed description for "property rates, penalties and collection charges" to property rates	Align to version 6.1 of *m*SCOA classification framework
6	A9	Changed breakdown of asset categories to align to CDIMS. Added a section on Upgrading of Existing Infrastructure.	Align to version 6.1 of *m*SCOA classification framework
8	SA3	Changed descriptions for "Call deposits < 90 days" and "Other current investments > 90 days" to exclude "< > 90 days".	Align to version 6.1 of *m*SCOA classification framework
9	SA17	Changed description of "Long-Term Loans (annuity/reducing balance)" to Annuity and Bullet Loans.	Align to version 6.1 of *m*SCOA classification framework
11	SA34(a-d)	Changed breakdown of asset categories to align to CDIMS.	Align to version 6.1 of *m*SCOA classification framework
12	SA34e	Added a table on Upgrading of Existing Infrastructure.	Align to version 6.1 of *m*SCOA classification framework
13	SA38	Added a table on operating expenditure projects	Align to version 6.1 of *m*SCOA classification framework

NATIONAL TREASURY

MFMA Circular No. 86

Municipal Finance Management Act No. 56 of 2003

Municipal Budget Circular for the 2017/18 MTREF

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Introduction

This budget circular is a follow-up to the one issued in December 2016. It guides municipalities with their preparation of the 2017/18 Medium Term Revenue and Expenditure Framework (MTREF) and, as with previous annual budget circulars it should be read within that context. Among the objectives of this circular, is to support municipalities with giving effect to National Treasury's Municipal Budget and Reporting Regulations (MBRR) within the current economic climate. The key focus of this circular is the implementation of municipal Standard Chart of Accounts (*m*SCOA) and the grant allocations as per the 2017 Budget Review.

1. The South African economy and inflation targets

The 2017 Budget Review emphasised that, while the global economic growth outlook has improved, it is clouded by the prevailing policy uncertainty due to the increasing pressure within the world trading system. These factors may jeopardise South Africa's prudent macroeconomic and fiscal policies, which include inflation targeting and a flexible exchange rate, the local economy's ability to adjust to global volatility and the stable investment platform.

GDP growth rate is forecasted to increase by 1.3 per cent in 2017 and to improve moderately over the medium term with to 2 per cent and 2.2 per cent in 2018 and 2019 respectively. This forecast is supported by marginally higher global growth, stabilising commodity prices, greater reliability of the electricity network, more favourable weather conditions, recovering business and consumer confidence, and improved labour relations. The positive trajectory marks a shift from several years of declining growth however; this is still not high enough to markedly reduce unemployment, poverty and inequality.

The unemployment rate was 26.5 per cent in the fourth quarter of 2016. In aggregate mining and manufacturing employment declined by 80 306 jobs in 2016 while the services sector created 119 189 jobs during the same period. The economy continues to create opportunities for semi-skilled and skilled workers, and to shed unskilled jobs, reinforcing poverty and inequality and widening the wage gap.

These economic challenges will continue to pressurise municipal revenue generation and collection levels hence a conservative approach is advised for projecting revenue. Municipalities will have to improve their efforts to limit non-priority spending and to implement stringent cost-containment measures.

The following macro-economic forecasts must be considered when preparing the 2017/18 MTREF municipal budgets.

Table 1: Macroeconomic performance and projections, 2015 - 2019

Fiscal year	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
	Estimate	Forecast		
Consumer Price Inflation (CPI)	6.4%	6.4%	5.7%	5.6%
Real GDP growth	0.5%	1.3%	2.0%	2.2%

Source: 2017 Budget Review.

Note: the fiscal year referred to is the national fiscal year (April to March) which is more closely aligned to the municipal fiscal year (July to June) than the calendar year inflation.

2. Key focus areas for the 2017/18 budget process

2.1 Local government conditional grants and additional allocations

The *2017 Budget Review* provides for R366.3 billion to be transferred directly to local government and a further R23 billion allocated to indirect grants for the 2017 MTREF. Direct transfers to local government over the medium term account for 9.1 per cent of national government's non-interest expenditure. When adding indirect transfers, the total spending for local government increases to 9.7 per cent of national non-interest expenditure.

Direct transfers to local government grow at an average rate of 8 per cent per annum over the 2017 MTEF. This strong growth in transfers to local government recognises the importance of local government functions and associated rising costs of municipal service delivery. Similarly, minor reductions are made to the larger conditional grants so that funds are prioritised in favour of other government priorities. Grant administrators and municipalities are encouraged to maximise the value derived from spending so that service delivery is not compromised.

Conditional grant funding targets delivery of national government's service delivery priorities. It is imperative that municipalities understand and comply with the conditions stipulated in the Division of Revenue Act (DoRA) in order to access this funding. The equitable share and the sharing of the general fuel levy constitute additional unconditional funding, of which the equitable share is designed to fund the provision of free basic services to disadvantaged communities.

Municipalities are reminded that all allocations included in their budgets must correspond to the allocations listed in the Division of Revenue Bill. All the budget documentation can be accessed from the National Treasury website by clicking on the link below:
http://ntintranet/documents/national%20budget/2017/

Changes to local government allocations

- The *local government equitable share* will grow by R3.3 billion over the MTEF period to assist municipalities with the rising costs of providing free basic services. An additional R1 billion will be added in 2018/19 and R2.3 billion in 2019/20 which further grows the 2016 Division of Revenue provision of R1.5 billion in 2017/18 and R3 billion in 2018/19. The formula, which is informed by the 2011 Census data, will be updated over the MTEF with data from the 2016 Community Survey. This data will be phased in over the MTEF period to ensure a smooth transition of the impact on the allocations to municipalities.

- Minor reductions are made to a mix of urban and rural grants, including, the *public transport network grant*, the *water services infrastructure grant*, the *municipal infrastructure grant* and the *urban settlements development grant* so that resources are available to fund other government priorities. In spite of the decreased allocations each of these grants will grow by at least 5 per cent annually over the 2017 MTEF period.

- Funds reprioritised from:
  - the *expanded public works programme integrated grant* to municipalities to fund the expanded mandate of the Commission for Conciliation, Mediation and Arbitration (as the commission will be providing its services to additional sectors);
  - the indirect *integrated national electrification programme (Eskom) grant*, mainly to fund the management of nuclear waste; and

- the indirect *regional bulk infrastructure grant* of which small amounts will be utilised to augment funding for water catchment management agencies.

- There is intent to introduce a new funding model for district municipalities upon completion of the Department of Cooperative Governance's review of their functional role. In 2017/18, adjustments are made to the *RSC/ JSB levies replacement grant* to redistribute funds to the 13 district municipalities currently receiving less than R40 million per year from this grant. The growth rates of the 10 district municipalities with the largest allocations are reduced to fund the increases to the other districts. They will receive two-thirds of their original growth rate in 2017/18 and one-third of their original growth rate in 2018/19.

  In the outer year of the MTEF period, the grant increases by 8.8 per cent a year for district municipalities that are authorised to undertake water and sanitation services and 2.9 per cent for district municipalities that are not such authorities. The different rates recognise the various service delivery responsibilities of these district municipalities and the fact that the allocations to unauthorised municipalities have an average growth rate below inflation.

The Department of Cooperative Governance, which administers the *municipal infrastructure grant*, continues to implement measures to strengthen the management and implementation of the grant. Changes to be introduced in 2017/18 include the circulation of:

- a guideline on how to plan, assess and implement refurbishment projects funded by the grant. The rules of the grant were changed in 2015/16 to allow this funding to be utilised for refurbishment however there have not been many projects of this nature since then. The new guideline will clarify the requirements for accessing this refurbishment funding.

- a revised guideline on the use of project management unit funds. Municipalities are allowed to use up to 5 per cent of their allocations from this grant for a project management unit. Grant conditions that require municipalities to submit business plans for their project management units will also allow the Department of Cooperative Governance to ensure that municipalities adhere to the guideline's best practices.

2.2 Municipal Standard Chart of Accounts (*m*SCOA)[1]

The *m*SCOA Regulations apply to all municipalities and municipal entities with effect from 1 July 2017.

Technically, for a municipality to be regarded as *m*SCOA compliant on 1 July 2017 it must be able to transact across all the *m*SCOA segments and its core system and all sub-systems (including that of its municipal entities) must seamlessly integrate. Among the lessons learnt from the pilot municipalities, stems the recommendation that a municipality's point of departure for achieving system integration is that it prioritises the maximum integration potential of its core system so that it integrates with the Debtors main sub-system (including cash management and receipting), Payroll and the Assets Management sub-system modules. Furthermore, all municipalities must accommodate seamless integration of the Integrated Development Plan (IDP), Service Delivery and Budget Implementation Plan (SDBIP) and Budget facilities into the core financial system as these documents create a point of departure for the transactional environment come 1 July 2017.

[1] The Minister of Finance promulgated the Municipal Regulations on a Standard Chart of Accounts in government gazette Notice No. 37577 on 22 April 2014.

This means that the compilation of the 2017/18 Medium-Term Budget and Expenditure Framework (MTREF) must be compliant with the *m*SCOA classification framework.

In summary, *m*SCOA compliance in respect of the tabled 2017/18 MTREF and IDP submission means that the data string uploaded to the LG Database portal must meet the following requirements:

- No mapping;
- Correct use of all segments;
- Seamless integration of core system with sub-systems (municipalities must ensure the integration of the Debtors, Payroll and Asset sub-systems); and
- Integrated budgeting facility directly linked to the IDP and SDBIP facilities on the system.

It is imperative that municipalities are familiar with the addendum to MFMA Circular No. 80 which describes what constitutes *m*SCOA compliance by 1 July 2017. National Treasury has a dedicated website to support municipalities with their *m*SCOA readiness efforts.

For more information on *m*SCOA and other benefits of the reform, visit: http://mfma.treasury.gov.za/RegulationsandGazettes/MunicipalRegulationsOnAStandardChartOfAccountsFinal/Pages/default.aspx

2.3 *m*SCOA training for municipal officials

Municipalities are advised not to approach the market to procure services for *m*SCOA training as National Treasury has partnered with the Chartered Institute of Government Finance, Audit and Risk Officers (CIGFARO, previously IMFO) to undertake *m*SCOA training.

3. The revenue budget

National Treasury encourages municipalities to maintain tariff increases at levels that reflect an appropriate balance between the affordability to poorer households and other customers while ensuring the financial sustainability of the municipality. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) inflation has however breached the upper limit of the 3 to 6 per cent target band; therefore municipalities are now required to ***justify all increases in excess of the 6.4 per cent*** projected inflation target in their budget narratives, and pay careful attention to the differential incidence of tariff increases across all consumer groups.

Where revenue collection is not well planned or managed, or where tariffs are not properly set, serious financial problems can arise. Eskom's recent move to cut off power supply to municipalities that have not paid electricity bills is an indication of what can happen when municipalities fail to manage this risk.

3.1 Eskom bulk tariff increases

On the 23rd February 2017, the National Energy Regulator of South Africa (NERSA), issued a media statement saying that Eskom's allowed revenue for 2017/18 would result in a 2.2 per cent increase in the approved bulk tariffs for Eskom that year. NERSA's consultation paper on tariff benchmarking indicates that this will result in a 0.31 per cent increase in bulk tariffs to municipalities (the difference is due to the different financial years of Eskom and municipalities).

This is significantly lower than the 8 per cent tariff increase provided for in the current Multi-Year Price Determination as a result of higher increases approved in preceding years (12.7

per cent for 2015/16 and 9.4 per cent for 2016/17). The statement also says that, *"Nothing prevents Eskom from considering any possible cash flow risks and the implications thereof on its financial sustainability and make an application to NERSA for relief in this regard should it consider it necessary."* The complete media statement can be accessed at www.nersa.org.za.

Section 42 of the MFMA requires that bulk price increases charged to municipalities by an organ of state must be tabled by 15 March if they are to be effected as from 1 July of the same year, unless the Minister of Finance grants an extension. The Minister of Finance, at the request of the Minister of Public Enterprises, has granted an extension until 5 April 2017 for the tabling of Eskom's 2017/18 bulk prices for municipalities. Municipalities must ensure that their budgets are informed by Eskom's bulk tariff to be tabled on that date. In the meantime municipalities are advised to use the NERSA's guided 0.31 per cent bulk tariff increase when compiling their budgets. This means that any changes to the final bulk tariff increase for 2017/18 to be tabled by Eskom on the 5 April 2017 will have to be factored in at that time.

Municipalities must note that the free basic services subsidy provided for in the local government equitable share were informed by the 8 per cent bulk tariff increase previously approved for the current Multi-Year Price Determination period. The equitable share allocations were tabled on 22 February 2017 in the Division of Revenue Bill, 2017. If a lower electricity bulk tariff is tabled for 2017/18 this will be offset in the calculation of the free basic services subsidy for equitable share allocations for 2018/19. This means that municipalities will have to budget to retain any surplus funds from the higher free basic services subsidy paid in 2017/18 in order to offset the cost of providing free basic electricity in 2018/19.

4. Funding choices and management issues

Municipalities should carefully consider the costs associated with service delivery while keeping in mind affordability and inflation when setting revenue raising measures. Once again, approving tariffs that are less than the associated cost of providing the services will negatively impact the financial sustainability of municipalities.

4.1 Employee related costs

The South African Local Government Bargaining Council entered into a three-year *Salary and Wage Collective Agreement* for the period 01 July 2015 to 30 June 2018. The preparation of the 2017/18 MTREF constitutes implementation of the last year of the agreement which municipalities must implement as follows:

- *2017/18 Financial Year – average CPI (Feb 2016 – Jan 2017) + 1 per cent*

The previous years were:

- *2015/16 Financial Year – 7 per cent*
- *2016/17 Financial Year – average CPI (Feb 2015 – Jan 2016) + 1 per cent*

4.2 Remuneration of councilors

Municipalities are advised to budget for the actual costs approved in accordance with the Government Gazette on the Remuneration of Public Office Bearers Act: Determination of Upper Limits of Salaries, Allowances and Benefits of different members of municipal councils published annually between December and January by the Department of Cooperative Governance.

5. Conditional Grant Transfers to Municipalities

5.1 Unspent Conditional Grants for 2016/17

In addition to the requirements outlined in the previous MFMA Circulars regarding unspent conditional grants, municipalities must know that the National Treasury uses the pre-audited Annual Financial Statements (AFS) to determine the unspent conditional grants. The decision is made based on the pre-audited AFS. Therefore, there will not be a review of the unspent conditional grants once the audited AFS are available. It is therefore imperative that municipalities ensure that there is completeness in reported figures on the pre-audited AFS.

Following the determination of unspent conditional grants to be surrendered to the National Revenue Fund, where municipalities fail to repay the unspent allocations and will not be able to withstand the impact of the offsetting of unspent allocations from their equitable share in one instalment, municipalities have an opportunity in terms of section 22 (5)(b) (ii) and (iii) to propose an alternative means acceptable to National Treasury by which the unspent allocations will be paid into the National Revenue Fund or to propose an alternative payment schedule (repayment arrangement).

Municipalities who intend to exercise the above option are encouraged to inform the National Treasury within 14 days upon receipt of the letter informing them of the unspent conditional grants to be repaid into the National Revenue Fund. Requests for repayment arrangements following the lapse of the 14 days will not be considered. The repayment arrangement is limited to a maximum of three installments, whereby municipalities can repay unspent allocations into the National Revenue Fund.

6. The Municipal Budget and Reporting Regulations

National Treasury has released Version 6.1 of Schedule A1 (the Excel Formats) which is aligned to version 6.1 of the *m*SCOA classification framework which must be used when compiling the 2017/18 MTREF budget. This version incorporates major changes (see Annexure A). Therefore **ALL** municipalities **MUST** use this version for the preparation of their 2017/18 MTREF budget.

Download Version 6.1 of Schedule A1 by clicking HERE

The Municipal Budget and Reporting Regulations, formats and associated guides are available on National Treasury's website at:
http://mfma.treasury.gov.za/RegulationsandGazettes/Pages/default.aspx

If municipalities require advice with the compilation of their respective budgets, specifically the budget documents or Schedule A1, they should direct their enquiries to their respective provincial treasuries or to the following National Treasury official:

	Responsible NT officials	Tel. No.	Email
Eastern Cape	Templeton Phogole	012-315 5044	Templeton.Phogole@treasury.gov.za
	Matjatji Mashoeshoe	012-315 6567	Matjatji.Mashoeshoe@treasury.gov.za
Free State	Vincent Malepa	012-315 5539	Vincent.Malepa@treasury.gov.za
	Cethekile Moshane	012-315 5079	Cethekile.moshane@treasury.gov.za
	Katlego Mabiletsa	012-395 6742	Katlego.Mabiletsa@treasury.gov.za
Gauteng	Kgomotso Baloyi	012-315 5866	Kgomotso.Baloyi@treasury.gov.za
	Nomxolisi Mawulana	012-315 5460	Nomxolisi.Mawulana@treasury.gov.za

KwaZulu-Natal	Bernard Mokgabodi Johan Botha	012-315 5936 012-315 5171	Bernard.Mokgabodi@treasury.gov.za Johan.Botha@treasury.gov.za
Limpopo	Una Rautenbach Sifiso Mabaso	012-315 5700 012-315 5952	Una.Rautenbach@treasury.gov.za Sifiso.Mabaso@treasury.gov.za
Mpumalanga	Jordan Maja Anthony Moseki	012-315 5663 012-315 5174	Jordan.Maja@treasury.gov.za Anthony.Moseki@treasury.gov.za
Northern Cape	Willem Voigt Mandla Gilimani	012-315 5830 012-315 5807	Willem.Voigt@treasury.gov.za Mandla.Gilimani@treasury.gov.za
North West	Sadesh Ramjathan Makgabo Mabotja	012-315 5101 012-315 5156	Sadesh.Ramjathan@treasury.gov.za Makgabo.Mabotja@treasury.gov.za
Western Cape	Templeton Phogole Vuyo Mbunge Kevin Bell	012-315 5044 012-315 5044 012-315 5725	Templeton.Phogole@treasury.gov.za Vuyo.Mbunge@treasury.gov.za Kevin.Bell@treasury.gov.za
Technical issues with Excel formats	Elsabe Rossouw	012-315 5534	lgdataqueries@treasury.gov.za

National Treasury, together with the provincial treasuries, will undertake a compliance check and, where municipalities have not provided complete budget information, the municipal budgets will be returned to the mayors and municipal managers of the affected municipalities for the necessary corrections. Municipal managers are reminded that the annual budget must be accompanied by a quality certificate and council resolution in accordance with the format specified in item 31 of Schedule A of the Municipal Budget and Reporting Regulations. In addition to the above compliance check, the *m*SCOA data strings will be assessed to determine whether the municipalities are compliant.

The National Treasury herewith emphasises that where municipalities have not adhered to the Municipal Budget and Reporting Regulations, ***they will be required to go back to the municipal council and table a complete budget document aligned to the requirement of the Municipal Budget and Reporting Regulations. In addition, where municipalities have tabled an unfunded budget, they will be required to correct the budget to ensure that a funded budget is adopted and implemented***.

Municipalities with municipal entities are once again reminded to prepare consolidated budgets and in-year monitoring reports for both the parent municipality and its entity or entities. The following must be compiled:

- An annual budget, adjustments budget and monthly financial reports for the parent municipality in the relevant formats;
- An annual budget, adjustments budget and monthly financial reports for the entity in the relevant formats; and
- A consolidated annual budget, adjustments budget and monthly financial reports for the parent municipality and all its municipal entities in the relevant formats.

The A Schedule that the municipality submits to National Treasury must be a consolidated budget for the municipality (plus entities) and the budget of the parent municipality. D schedules must be submitted for each entity.

7. Budget process and submissions for the 2017/18 MTREF

7.1 Budgeting for the audited years on the A schedule (*m*SCOA)

According to international best practices, it is appropriate to reclassify historical information in line with the changes that occur in the Standard Chart of Accounts. However considering our

own circumstances and the technical capability of smaller municipalities, it is proposed that municipalities disclose audited and the current years' (2016/17) information using version 2.8 of the A schedule. In relation to the 2017/18 MTREF municipalities must use version 6.1 of the A schedule. By implication two separate schedules must be submitted.

The amalgamated municipalities must not complete the audited years because they are new institutions that existed after the Local Government elections in August 2016, therefore they do not have the audited figures. As a result of that, there will not be verification of audited years for the pre-amalgamation municipalities. They are required to submit the current year (2016/17) and the 2017/18 MTREF budgets.

7.2 Submitting budget documentation and schedules for 2017/18 MTREF

To facilitate oversight of compliance with the Municipal Budget and Reporting Regulations, accounting officers are reminded that:

- Section 22(b)(i) of the MFMA requires that, ***immediately*** after an annual budget is tabled in a municipal council, it must be submitted to the National Treasury and the relevant provincial treasury in both printed and electronic formats. If the annual budget is tabled to council on 31 March 2017, the final date of submission of the electronic budget documents and corresponding electronic returns is **Monday, 03 April 2017**. This includes the submission of the *m*SCOA data string. The deadline for submission of hard copies including council resolution is **Friday, 7 April 2017**.
- Section 24(3) of the MFMA, read together with regulation 20(1), requires that the approved annual budget must be submitted to both National Treasury and the relevant provincial treasury ***within ten working days*** after the council has approved the annual budget. If the council only approves the annual budget on 30 June 2017, the final date for such a submission is **Friday, 14 July 2017**, otherwise an earlier date applies.

The municipal manager must submit:

- the budget documentation as set out in Schedule A (version 6.1) of the Municipal Budget and Reporting Regulations, including the main Tables (A1 - A10) and ALL the supporting tables (SA1 – SA38) in both printed and electronic formats;
- the draft service delivery and budget implementation plan in both printed and electronic format;
- the draft service delivery standards;
- the draft integrated development plan;
- the council resolution;
- signed Quality Certificate as prescribed in the Municipal Budget and Reporting Regulations;
- schedules D, E and F specific for the entities; and
- the budget locking certificate.

Municipalities are required to send electronic versions of documents and the A1 schedule to lgdocuments@treasury.gov.za.

If the budget documents are too large to be sent via email (exceeds 4MB) please submit to lgbigfiles@gmail.com. Any problems experienced in this regard can be addressed with Elsabe Rossouw at Elsabe.Rossouw@treasury.gov.za.

Municipalities are required to send printed submissions of their budget documents and council resolution to:

For couriered documents	*For posted documents*
Ms Linda Kruger	Ms Linda Kruger
National Treasury	National Treasury
40 Church Square	Private Bag X115
Pretoria, 0002	Pretoria, 0001

In addition to the above mentioned budget documentation, metropolitan municipalities must submit the Built Environment Performance Plan (BEPP) tabled in council on 31 March 2017 to Yasmin.coovadia@treasury.gov.za. If the BEPP documents are too large to be sent via email (exceeds 4MB) please submit to yasmin.coovadia@gmail.com or send to Yasmin Coovadia via Dropbox; any problems experienced in this regard can be addressed with Yasmin.Coovadia@treasury.gov.za. Hard copies of the BEPP may be sent to Yasmin Coovadia, National Treasury, 3rd floor 40 Church Square, Pretoria, 0002 or Private Bag X115, Pretoria, 0001.

7.3 Budget reform returns to the Local Government Database for publication

Municipalities are required to continue to use the Budget Reform Returns to upload budget and monthly expenditure to the National Treasury Local Government Database for publication purposes. All returns are to be sent to lgdatabase@treasury.gov.za. Municipalities must submit returns for both the tabled budget and the final adopted budget as this will assist the National and provincial treasuries with the annual benchmark process.

In addition, municipalities must submit the *m*SCOA compliant data strings to the LG Upload Portal. National Treasury will continue with parallel reporting from municipalities until it is satisfied that all municipalities are *m*SCOA compliant and reporting adequately to support all publications.

The current electronic returns may be downloaded from National Treasury's website at the following link: http://mfma.treasury.gov.za/Return_Forms/Pages/default.aspx.

7.4 Publication of budgets on municipal websites

In terms of section 75 of the MFMA, all municipalities are required to publish their tabled budgets, adopted budgets, annual reports (containing audited annual financial statements) and other relevant information on the municipality's website. This will aid in promoting public accountability and good governance.

All relevant documents mentioned in this circular are available on the National Treasury website, http://mfma.treasury.gov.za/Pages/Default.aspx. Municipalities are encouraged to visit it regularly as documents are regularly added / updated on the website.

7.5 The use of private emails for business purposes

There are municipalities that use private email addresses for business purposes (e.g. Gmail). For the purpose of the implementation of *m*SCOA the Local Government Database requires municipalities to update their contact details and provide official email addresses instead of private. Therefore municipalities must follow the process of ensuring that their Information and Communication Technology infrastructure can accommodate official email addresses. Further requirements will be issued in this regard.

Contact

national treasury
Department:
National Treasury
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA

Post	Private Bag X115, Pretoria 0001
Phone	012 315 5009
Fax	012 395 6553
Website	http://www.treasury.gov.za/default.aspx

JH Hattingh
Chief Director: Local Government Budget Analysis
08 March 2017

Annexure A – Changes to Schedule A1 – the 'Excel formats'

As noted above, National Treasury has released Version 6.1 of Schedule A1 (the Excel Formats). It incorporates the following changes:

No.	Sheet	Amendment	Reason
1	A2 and A2A	Changed reference to "Standard Classification" to functional classification and included detailed functional classification.	Align to version 6.1 of *m*SCOA classification framework
2	A4, SA2 and SA25	Deleted "Property rates – penalties and collection charges". Changed description for fines to "Fines, penalties and forfeits".	Align to version 6.1 of *m*SCOA classification framework
4	A5	Changed reference to "Standard Classification" to functional classification	Align to version 6.1 of *m*SCOA classification framework
5	A7 and SA30	Changed description for "property rates, penalties and collection charges" to property rates	Align to version 6.1 of *m*SCOA classification framework
6	A9	Changed breakdown of asset categories to align to CDIMS. Added a section on Upgrading of Existing Infrastructure.	Align to version 6.1 of *m*SCOA classification framework
8	SA3	Changed descriptions for "Call deposits < 90 days" and "Other current investments > 90 days" to exclude "< > 90 days".	Align to version 6.1 of *m*SCOA classification framework
9	SA17	Changed description of "Long-Term Loans (annuity/reducing balance)" to Annuity and Bullet Loans.	Align to version 6.1 of *m*SCOA classification framework
11	SA34(a-d)	Changed breakdown of asset categories to align to CDIMS.	Align to version 6.1 of *m*SCOA classification framework
12	SA34e	Added a table on Upgrading of Existing Infrastructure.	Align to version 6.1 of *m*SCOA classification framework
13	SA38	Added a table on operating expenditure projects	Align to version 6.1 of *m*SCOA classification framework

ANNEXURE 1

MUNICIPAL TARIFF GUIDELINE INCREASE, BENCHMARKS AND PROPOSED TIMELINES FOR MUNICIPAL TARIFF APPROVAL PROCESS FOR THE 2017/18 FINANCIAL YEAR

Consultation Paper

23 February 2017

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

A	Ampere
BP	Bulk Purchase
BPI	Bulk Purchase Increase
CC	Capital Charges
c/kWh	Cents per kilowatt-hour
CCI	Capital Charges Increase
CPI	Consumer Price Index
D-forms	Distribution Forms
EPT	Electricity Pricing and Tariffs
ERA	Electricity Regulation Act, 2006 (Act no.4 of 2006)
ERTSA	Eskom Retail Tariff Structural Adjustment
IBT	Inclining Block Tariff
kVA	Kilovolts-Amps
kWh	Kilowatt-hour
LF	Load Factor
MD	Maximum Demand
MFMA	Municipal Finance Management Act, 2003 (Act no.56 of 2003)
MWh	Megawatt-hour
MYPD	Multi-Year Price Determination
NERSA	National Energy Regulator of South Africa
OC	Other Costs
OCI	Other Costs Increase
R	Repairs
RCA	Regulatory Clearing Account
RI	Repairs Increase
S	Salary
SI	Salary Increase
TOU	Time-of-Use
V	Volt

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The National Energy Regulator (NERSA) is the regulatory authority over the energy sector in South Africa and its mandate includes the regulation of the electricity supply industry. In terms of section 4(ii) of the Electricity Regulation Act, 2006 (Act No. 4 of 2006) ('the ERA'), the Energy Regulator must regulate electricity prices and tariffs.

The Energy Regulator approves a percentage guideline increase and reviews the municipal tariff benchmarks, on an annual basis. The guideline increase assists the municipalities in the preparation of their budgets and tariff adjustment applications.

On 23 February 2017, the Energy Regulator confirmed a determination on the final year (2017/18) of Eskom's third Multi-Year Price Determination (MYPD3) period. Subsequently, Eskom's Retail Tariff Structural Adjustments (ERTSA) application was approved.

The municipal tariff guideline increase is developed based on Eskom's approved bulk price increase of electricity to municipalities and the increase on the municipalities' cost structures. Hence the approval of the municipal guideline increase is subsequent to the determination of ERTSA. The benchmarks are developed in order to ensure that tariffs across municipalities are not vastly different and are used in the evaluation of the municipal tariff applications.

This consultation paper on the guideline is issued in line with the MYPD decision as approved by the Energy Regulator and confirmed on 23 February 2017. In the instance that circumstances change the current decision of the Energy Regulator which has influenced the development of this guideline, in line with the provisions of the ERA, NERSA will ensure that licensees are able to recover the full cost of licensed activities through an adjustment mechanism that NERSA will consider necessary.

The Energy Regulator is requesting the stakeholders to comment on the percentage guideline increase, the benchmarks and the proposed timelines as set out in this consultation paper. The comments should be addressed to: **Ms Tabisa Nkopo** or **Ms Nthabiseng Mapitsing** at **The National Energy Regulator, Kulawula House, 526 Madiba Street, Arcadia,**

Pretoria or emailed to: **municguideline@nersa.org.za**. The deadline for the submission of comments is 20 March 2017.

NERSA will not hold a public hearing on the key issues highlighted in the consultation paper, but will follow the notice and comment procedure in terms of Section 4 (3) of the Promotion to Administration Justice Act, 2000 (Act No. 3 of 2000). This is due to the fact that in the past, few to no presenters attended the public hearing to make representations to NERSA.

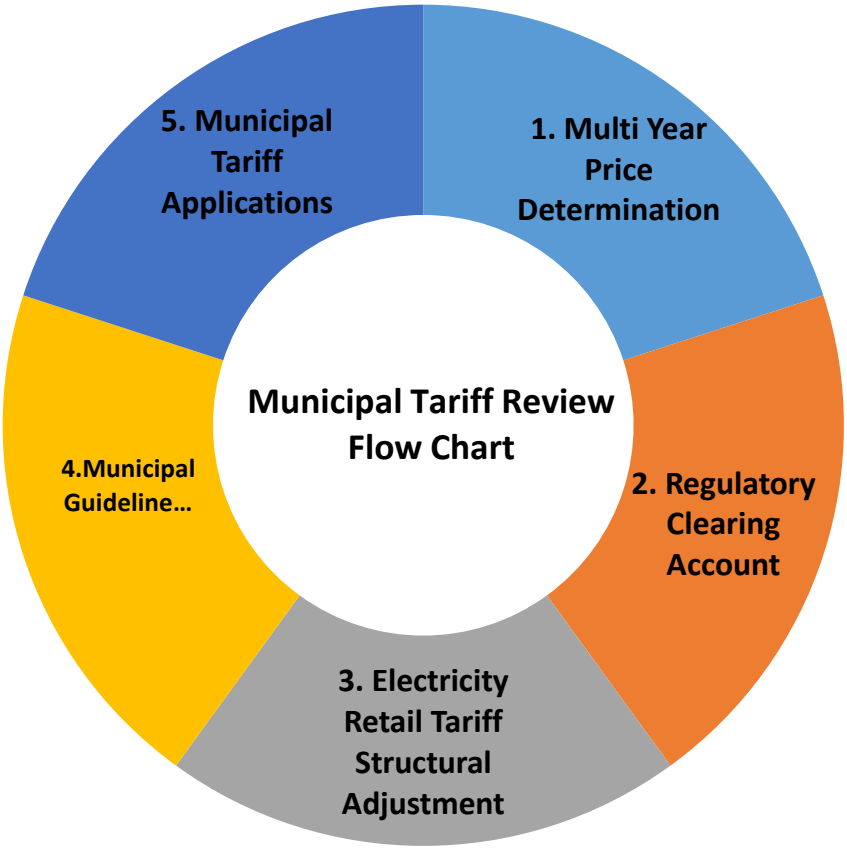
2. BACKGROUND

The consultation paper incorporates price or tariff adjustments by municipal distributors, the municipal tariff benchmarks, tariff applications and the approval processes. Eskom generates approximately 95% of the energy that is consumed in the country and the municipal distributors purchase their energy from Eskom. All municipalities are informed about the approved guideline percentage increase. This is not an automatic increase for the municipalities and private distributors. As a result, NERSA allows licensees to submit their proposed price adjustments or tariff increases annually for approval by the Energy Regulator.

Benchmarks are based on five tariff categories and the corresponding average consumption levels. NERSA acknowledges that these are average consumption levels and that there may also be other tariff classes at various municipalities that will cater for other customer classes or consumption levels. Where such circumstances exist, the municipality's tariff applications will be treated on a case-by-case basis.

According to the NERSA timelines, the municipal tariff guideline and benchmarks will be approved in April 2017. Municipalities are required to submit their tariff applications to NERSA as soon as possible upon receipt of the municipal tariff guideline letter.

2.1. The municipal tariff review flow chart



2.2. Issues considered in the analysis of the municipal tariff review

NERSA approved a Cost of Supply (COS) study framework as it is a requirement of the Electricity Pricing Policy (EPP). Therefore, municipalities are urged to perform cost of supply studies so that the revenue earned by the municipalities per tariff category is aligned with the cost to supply electricity.

The following factors, among others, will be taken into account when determining the average cost to supply:

a) bulk purchases;
b) bad debts;
c) reasonable energy losses;
d) direct and indirect charges;
e) salaries and wages; and
f) capital charges.

The municipalities' overall financial and technical performance will be reviewed prior to a final decision on the overall tariff increase. Indicators to be considered in this regard mainly include:

a) percentage surplus;
b) percentage energy losses;
c) percentage power costs;
d) repairs and maintenance;
e) bad debt provision; and
f) average selling price/average purchase price ratio.

2.3. Submission of D-form information

NERSA held workshops and one-on-one interactions with municipalities per province in order to assist municipalities with the completion of the Distribution forms (D-forms). This process ran parallel with the submission of the D-forms. Access to the D-form templates can be obtained through the NERSA website (www.nersa.org.za). The closing date for the submission of the D-forms is 31 October annually. Municipalities that have been contacted by NERSA regarding inaccurate or outstanding data are required to ensure that accurate information is submitted timeously to NERSA, in order to ensure that proper analysis is done and the approval of the tariff applications is achieved. The distribution forms that are primarily used for the tariff approval process are D1 (Financial information), D2 (Market information) and D3 (Human Resources information).

These forms contain information regarding the financial position, efficiency levels of the municipality, data regarding the customer's consumption patterns and the number of customers per tariff category. This information assists NERSA in the analysis of the tariffs and in determining the revenues that the municipality collects from the various tariff categories.

NERSA will not consider any municipal tariff applications without the submission of appropriate and accurate D-form information.

3. DETERMINATION OF THE MUNICIPAL TARIFF GUIDELINE

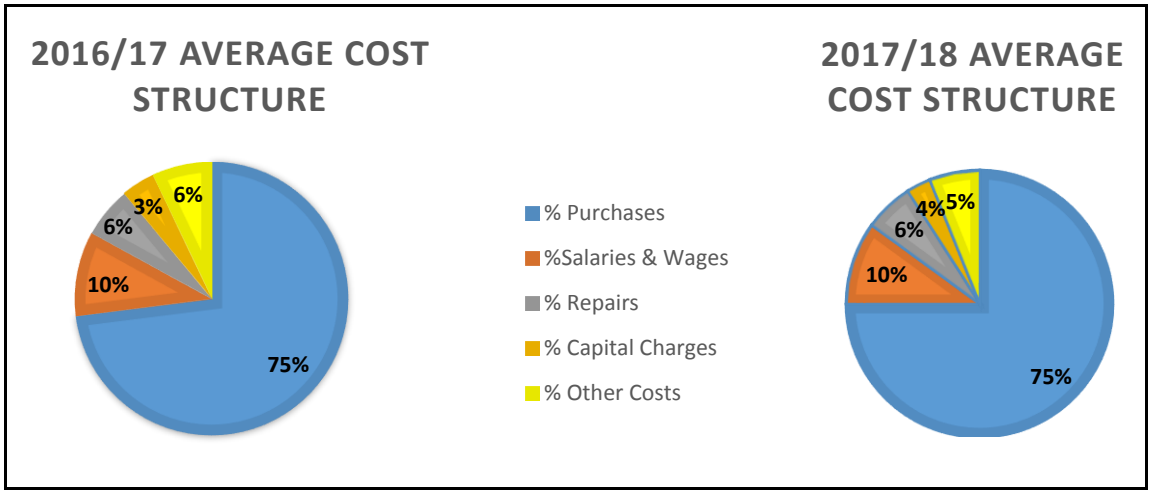
When developing the percentage guideline increase for 2017/18, the following issues were considered and the assumptions were made.

On 23 February 2017, the Energy Regulator granted Eskom an annual average increase of 2.2% leading to a bulk purchase increase of 0.31% for municipalities. This is due to the Municipal Finance Management Act, 2003 (Act No. 56 of 2003) ('the MFMA') time lag (the municipalities' implementation date is 01 July whereas Eskom's financial year starts on 01 April).

Issues considered when developing the percentage guideline increase for 2017/18:

a) The 2014/15 D-form information was used to determine whether there would be changes to the municipality's cost structures.
b) A stratified random sampling amounting to 140 D-forms was done.
c) The chosen sample is useful in determining whether the weights of the cost drivers that have been developed need to be revised or maintained.

The pie chart below indicates the findings from the analysis done from the various sized municipalities.



The data from the computed various sized municipalities indicated a change in the weights of the cost structures. The municipal bulk purchases remain unchanged at 75% as the increase in bulk purchase was insignificant. The average percentage for salaries and wages has been maintained at 10% in order for municipalities to incorporate the recruitment of skilled staff, additional staff and the allowance for paying scarce skills allowance. NERSA requires municipalities to spend 6% of their total ring-fenced electricity revenue on repairs and maintenance to ensure a sustainable electricity supply system. The capital charges increased from 3% to 4% and other costs have been reduced from 6% to 5% in order for municipality to allocate their costs accordingly.

Municipalities must submit their specific cost drivers should they be different from the ones presented by NERSA in the consultation paper. This will assist NERSA in considering municipalities on a case-by-case basis based on their actual cost structures.

Stakeholder Comment # 1
Stakeholders are invited to comment on the changes in the breakdown of the cost weighting that NERSA has taken into consideration when developing the guideline.

In developing the guideline, the following assumptions on cost increases were made:

a) Bulk purchases will increase by 0.31% as indicated in the Eskom standard tariff submission for the 2017/18 financial year.
b) Consumer Price Index (CPI) – 6.2%[1].
c) Salary increase – CPI plus 1%[2] .
d) Repairs and maintenance, capital charges and other costs will increase by CPI.

[1] As indicated in the Bureau for Economic Research (BER) 2017/18
[2] As indicated in Circular No. 31/2015: Salary and Wage Collective Agreement

3.1. The formula for calculating the guideline increase:

MG = (BP x BPI) + (S x SI) + (R x RI) + (CC x CCI) + (OC x OCI)

= (75 x 0.0031) + (10 x 0.072) + (6 x 0.062) + (4 x 0.062) + (5^3 x 0.062)

= 0.233 + 0.720 + 0.372 + 0.248 + 0.310

= 1.88%

Where:

- MG = % Municipal Guideline Increase
- BP = % Bulk purchases
- BPI =% Bulk purchase increase
- S = % Salary
- SI = % Salary increase
- R = % Repairs
- RI = % Repairs increase
- C = % Capital charges
- CCI = % Capital charges increase
- OC = % Other costs
- OCI= % Other costs increase

Table 3: Calculation of the guideline for the 2017/18 financial year

COST LINE ITEM	REVISED MUNIC % OF TOTAL COST	EXPECTED INCREASE %	WEIGHTED AVERAGE EXPECTED INCREASE %
Purchases	75	0.31	0.233
Salaries and wages	10	7.2	0.720
Repairs & Maintenance	6	6.2	0.372
Capital charges in total	4	6.2	0.248
Other Costs[4]	5	6.2	0.310
% increase			**1.88**

Municipalities applying for an increase that is above the guideline will have to justify their increases to the Energy Regulator and the approval will be based on the following requirements:

[3] The 'other costs' have been reduced in order for municipalities to allocate their costs accordingly.

[4] Charges allocated from and to municipal departments, general expenses (costs related to the Municipal Electricity Department but not indicated on the D-forms).

a) a detailed plan on the additional funds requested needs to be presented to NERSA as part of the motivation for the above-guideline increase (the municipality must provide a detailed revenue analysis whereby it indicates the revenue when using the approved guideline percentage increase versus the actual required revenue and the list of items, i.e. repairs and maintenance, where the extra funds will be allocated);
b) the approved funds must be ring-fenced to ensure that the extra funds are strictly utilised for the identified projects;
c) municipalities must report to NERSA on a six-monthly basis on how the additional funds are utilised; and
d) funds not utilised for the purpose for which they were approved will be clawed back in the following financial year.

4. THE MUNICIPAL ELECTRICITY TARIFF BENCHMARKS

4.1. The municipal electricity tariff benchmarks for the 2016/17 financial year

The existing benchmarks are based on five assumed tariff/customer categories, as set out below.

4.1.1 Current benchmarks

- **Domestic (Block 1 – 4)**

Table 1: Average Domestic Benchmarks

Domestic Inclining Block Tariffs (IBTs)			
Block 1 (0-50 kWh) c/kWh	Block 2 (51-350 kWh) c/kWh	Block 3 (350-600 kWh) c/kWh	Block 4 (>600 kWh) c/kWh
77.00 - 84.00	101.00 - 108.00	144.00 - 152.00	173.00 - 179.00

The alternative domestic Inclining Block Tariff (IBT) structures and benchmarks are as indicated below.

- **Domestic Low**

Table 2: Average Domestic Low

Domestic Inclining Block Tariffs Low (IBTs)	
Block 1 (0-350 kWh) c/kWh	Block 2 (351-600 kWh) c/kWh
98.00 - 103.00	142.00 - 149.00

- **Domestic High**

Table 3: Average Domestic High

Domestic Inclining Block Tariffs High (IBTs)	
Block 1 (0-350 kWh) c/kWh	Block 2 (351-600 kWh) c/kWh
95.00 - 101.00	140.00 - 146.00
Basic Charge (R/month)	

- **Domestic Non-IBT Benchmark**

Table 4: Average Domestic Non-IBT Benchmarks

Domestic Non- IBT	
Domestic Low (400 kWh) c/kWh	Domestic High (800 kWh) c/kWh
108.00 - 115.00	136.00 - 141.00

4.2. Commercial Benchmarks

4.2.1 Commercial Benchmarks Prepaid and Conventional Single Phase

- **Commercial Prepaid Single Phase**

Table 5: Average Benchmarks for Commercial Prepaid Single Phase

Commercial - Prepaid (2000 kWh)		
c/kWh		
180.00	-	187.00

- **Commercial Conventional Single Phase - Low**

Table 6: Average Benchmarks for Commercial Low Single Phase

Commercial Low (2 000 kWh)		
c/kWh		
167.00	-	172.00

- **Commercial Conventional Single Phase - Medium**

Table 7: Average Benchmarks for Commercial Medium Single Phase

Commercial Medium (3 000 kWh)		
c/kWh		
161.00	-	168.00

- **Commercial Conventional Single Phase - High**

Table 8: Average Benchmarks for Commercial High Single Phase

Commercial High (7 000 kWh)		
c/kWh		
142.00	-	149.00

4.3.1 Commercial Benchmarks Prepaid and Conventional Three Phase

- **Commercial Prepaid Three Phase**

Table 9: Average Benchmarks for Commercial Prepaid Three Phase

Commercial Low (5500 kWh)		
c/kWh		
180.00	-	187.00

- **Commercial Conventional Three Phase – Low**

Table 10: Average Benchmarks for Commercial Low Three Phase

Commercial Low (5500 kWh)		
c/kWh		
142.00	-	148.00

- **Commercial Conventional Three Phase – Medium**

Table 11: Average Benchmarks for Commercial Medium Three Phase

Commercial Medium (11500 kWh)		
c/kWh		
135.00	-	141.00

- **Commercial Conventional Three Phase – High**

Table 12: Average Benchmarks for Commercial High Three Phase

Commercial High (22 000 kWh)		
c/kWh		
132.00	-	138.00

4.3. Agriculture Benchmarks

- **Agriculture Low**

Table13: Average Benchmark for Agriculture Low

Agriculture Low (2000 kWh)		
c/kWh		
194.00	-	200.00

- **Agriculture Medium**

Table14: Average Benchmark for Agriculture Medium

Agriculture Medium (3000 kWh)		
c/kWh		
184.00	-	190.00

- **Agriculture High**

Table15: Average Benchmark for Agriculture High

Agriculture High (7000 kWh)		
c/kWh		
157.00	-	163.00

4.4. Industrial Benchmark

- **Industrial Low**

Table 16: Average Benchmark for Industrial Low

Industrial Low(43800 kWh)		
c/kWh		
163.00	-	171.00

- **Industrial Medium**

Table 17: Average Benchmark for Industrial Medium

Industrial Medium (98550 kWh)		
c/kWh		
160.00	-	166.00

- **Industrial High**

Table 18: Average Benchmark for Industrial High

Industrial High (730 000 kWh)		
c/kWh		
144.00	-	150.00

4.4.1 Time-of-Use Benchmark

- **Industrial Time-of Use (TOU) Megaflex**

Table 19: Average Benchmark for Industrial Time of Use (TOU) Megaflex

Industrial Medium (98550 kWh)		
c/kWh		
146.00	-	153.00

- **Industrial Time-of Use (TOU) Nightsave**

Table 20: Average Benchmark for Industrial Time of Use (TOU) Nightsave

Industrial High (730 000 kWh)		
c/kWh		
199.00	-	206.00

5. THE FINANCIAL BENCHMARKS

The table below indicates the weights of the financial benchmarks for the 2017/18 financial year. The municipalities that operate within these benchmarks are considered to run a sustainable and efficient electricity business.

Financial benchmarks

	Current Benchmarks	Revised Benchmarks	Financial Benchmarks (Acceptable Range)[5]
Percentage Power cost	75%	75%[6]	58% - 78%
Percentage Surplus	15%	15%[7]	10% - 20%
System losses	10%	10%[8]	5% - 12%
Average Sales Price/Average Purchase Price ratio	1:1.58	1:1.58	1:1.58 – 1:1.62
Repairs & Maintenance	Minimum of 6%		
Debt collection rate	95%		

- The municipalities are encouraged to improve their debt collection rate, as this will assist them in collecting revenue that will enable them to be efficient and effective, as well as sustainable.

Stakeholder Comment # 2

Stakeholders are invited to comment on whether NERSA should consider other indicators when determining the efficiency of the municipality.

6. MUNICIPAL TARIFFS ABOVE THE NERSA BENCHMARKS

Municipalities applying for tariffs that are outside the approved benchmarks must justify such increases and the following information must be submitted:

- the total number of customers per tariff category – municipalities that do not have an appropriate customer base must submit the full detail of its customer profile, as well as the associated revenues;
- expected revenues per tariff category;
- the forecasted total sales;

[5] The acceptable ranges are NERSA's allowable ranges.
[6] In accordance with the municipal cost structure as indicated in the municipal tariff guideline consultation paper.
[7] The applicable financial benchmark for municipalities.
[8] The applicable technical benchmark for municipalities.

- the average maximum demand per tariff (where applicable);
- the actual consumption; and
- the load profile in percentages (both summer and winter, where applicable).

The municipalities are encouraged to develop time-of-use tariffs in order to enable the customer to benefit from shifting their load. This will also enable municipalities to charge their customers prices that are similar to what Eskom is charging them.

7. THE PROPOSED MUNICIPAL ELECTRICITY TARIFF BENCHMARKS FOR 2017/18

7.1 The revised benchmarks

The benchmarks for the 2017/18 financial year have been developed as follows for the different tariff categories.

7.1.1 Domestic Benchmarks (Block 1 – 4)

The domestic tariffs for the 2016/17 benchmark were increased by the municipal tariff guideline increase of 1.88%.

Table 21: Average Domestic Benchmarks

Domestic Inclining Block Tariffs (IBTs)			
Block 1 (0-50 kWh) c/kWh	Block 2 (51-350 kWh) c/kWh	Block 3 (350-600 kWh) c/kWh	Block 4 (>600 kWh) c/kWh
78.45 - 85.58	102.90 110.03	146.71 154.86	176.26 182.37

7.1.2 The alternative domestic IBT benchmarks were developed as follows:

- **Domestic Low**

Table 22: Average Domestic Low

Domestic Inclining Block Tariffs Low (IBTs)	
Block 1 (0-350 kWh) c/kWh	Block 2 (351-600 kWh) c/kWh
99.84 - 104.94	144.67 - 151.80

- **Domestic High**

Table 23: Average Domestic High

Domestic High IBT	
Block 1 (0-350 kWh) c/kWh	Block 2 (351-600 kWh) c/kWh
96.79 - 102.90	142.63 - 148.75
Basic Charge (R/month)	

7.1.3 The domestic tariffs Non-IBT

Table 24: Average Domestic Non-IBT Benchmarks

Domestic Non- IBT	
Domestic Low (400 kWh) c/kWh	Domestic High (800 kWh) c/kWh
110.03 - 117.16	138.56 - 143.65

7.2 Commercial Benchmarks

7.2.1 Commercial Benchmarks Prepaid and Conventional Single Phase

The commercial single phase tariffs for the 2016/17 benchmark were increased by the municipal tariff guideline increase of 1.88%.

- **Commercial Prepaid Single Phase**

Table 25: Average Benchmarks for Commercial Prepaid Single Phase

Commercial- Prepaid (2 000 kWh)		
c/kWh		
183.39	-	190.52

- **Commercial Conventional Single Phase – Low**

Table 26: Average Benchmarks for Commercial Low Single Phase

Commercial Low (2 000 kWh)		
c/kWh		
170.14	-	175.24

- **Commercial Conventional Single Phase - Medium**

Table 27: Average Benchmarks for Commercial Medium Single Phase

Commercial Medium (3 000 kWh)		
c/kWh		
164.03	-	171.16

- **Commercial Conventional Single Phase - High**

Table 28: Average Benchmarks for Commercial High Single Phase

Commercial High (7 000 kWh)		
c/kWh		
144.67	-	151.80

7.2.2 Commercial Benchmarks Prepaid and Conventional Three Phase

The commercial three-phase prepaid tariff for the 2016/17 benchmark were increased by the municipal tariff guideline increase of 1.88%.

- **Commercial Prepaid Three-Phase**

Table 29: Average Benchmarks for Commercial Prepaid Three Phase

Commercial Low (5500 kWh)		
c/kWh		
183.39	-	190.52

- **Commercial Conventional Three Phase – Low**

Table 30: Average Benchmarks for Commercial Low Three Phase

Commercial Low (5500 kWh)		
c/kWh		
144.67	-	150.78

- **Commercial Conventional Three Phase – Medium**

Table 31: Average Benchmarks for Commercial Medium Three Phase

Commercial Medium (11500 kWh)		
c/kWh		
137.54	-	143.65

- **Commercial Conventional Three Phase – High**

Table 32: Average Benchmarks for Commercial High Three Phase

Commercial High (22 000 kWh)		
c/kWh		
134.48	-	140.60

7.3 Agriculture Benchmarks

- The agriculture tariffs for the 2016/17 benchmarks were increased by the municipal tariff guideline increase of 1.88%.

  - **Agriculture Low**

Table 33: Average Benchmark for Agriculture Low

Agriculture Low (2000 kWh)		
c/kWh		
197.65	-	203.76

  - **Agriculture Medium**

Table 34: Average Benchmark for Agriculture Medium

Agriculture Medium (3000 kWh)		
c/kWh		
187.46	-	193.58

  - **Agriculture High**

Table 35: Average Benchmark for Agriculture High

Agriculture High (7000 kWh)		
c/kWh		
159.95	-	166.07

7.4 Industrial Benchmark

- The industrial tariffs for the 2016/17 benchmarks were increased by the municipal tariff guideline increase of 1.88%.

  - **Industrial Low**

Table 36: Average Benchmark for Industrial Low

Industrial Low (43800 kWh)		
c/kWh		
166.07	-	174.22

- **Industrial Medium**

Table 37: Average Benchmark for Industrial Medium

Industrial Medium (98550 kWh)		
c/kWh		
163.01	-	169.12

- **Industrial High**

Table 38: Average Benchmark for Industrial High

Industrial High (730 000kWh)		
c/kWh		
146.71	-	152.82

7.5 Industrial Time-of-Use Megaflex and Nightsave

The Industrial Time of Use benchmarks for Megaflex and Nightsave have been revised as a result of changes in load factor (LF) and the maximum demand (MD).

When revising the Industrial Time of Use benchmarks for Megaflex and Nightsave the load factor of 43.00% and a maximum demand of 351 184kVA per month were used respectively. The changes in LF and MD resulted in lower benchmarks for Megaflex and Nightsave

- **Industrial Time-of-Use Megaflex**

Table 39: Average Benchmark for Industrial Time of Use (TOU) Megaflex

Industrial TOU (1 323 MWh) Megaflex		
c/kWh		
120.22	-	126.33

- **Industrial Time-of-Use Nightsave**

Table 40: Average Benchmark for Industrial Time of Use (TOU) Nightsave

Industrial TOU (1 323 MWh) Nightsave		
c/kWh		
177.27	-	183.38

Stakeholder Comment # 3

Stakeholders are requested to comment on the proposed benchmarks

8. TIMELINES FOR MUNICIPAL TARIFF APPROVAL PROCESS AND GUIDELINE DETERMINATION

Municipalities are bound by among other legislation, the MFMA and Municipal Systems Act (MSA). According to the MFMA budgetary process, a budget circular to all municipalities is issued by National Treasury by the end of November annually. This circular takes into account NERSA's approved guideline increase.

It is anticipated that municipalities will compile and submit tariff applications for NERSA's consideration from April 2017.

Section 43 of the MFMA states that:

(1) If a national or provincial organ of state in terms of a power contained in any national or provincial legislation determines the upper limits of a municipal tax or tariff, such determination takes effect for municipalities on a date specified in the determination.

(2) Unless the Minister on good grounds approves otherwise, the date specified in a determination referred to in subsection (1) may -

a) If the determination was promulgated on or before 15 March in a year, not be a date before 1 July in that year; or

b) If the determination was promulgated after the 15 March in a year, not be a date before 1 July in the next year.

The table below illustrates the timelines and processes leading to the approval of municipal tariff and guideline.

Table 41: Approval of the Municipal Tariff Guideline and Benchmarks

ACTIVITY/TASK	DATE
Modelling of the municipal tariff guideline and benchmarks	03 Jan –13 Feb 2017
Publishing of the municipal tariff guideline, benchmarks and proposed timelines for the consultation paper on NERSA's website	28 Feb 17
Consultations with key stakeholders (NT, AMEU, SALGA)	28 Feb - 20 March 2017
Closing date for stakeholder comments	20 March 2017
NERSA's decision on the municipal tariff guideline increase, benchmarks and proposed timelines	April 2017
Communicate approved guideline, benchmarks and proposed timelines to municipalities	April 2017